



AFGHANISTAN AND THE SUPER POWERS SINCE 1945

ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

Afghanistan is a small, landlocked country whose geographical location has attracted great power rivalry for centuries in the past and presently it has become a focal point of super power rivalry especially after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the continued presence of tens of thousands of Soviet troops on Afghan soil. Prior to the Second World War, Afghanistan had been subject to Anglo-Russian rivalry nearly for about seventeen decades but the former pursued a policy of strict neutrality while pursuing an independent foreign policy and thus safeguarding its territorial integrity and sovereignty. The conclusion of the Second World War witnessed the decline of traditional colonial powers leading to the emergence of United States and Soviet Union as super powers vying each other for winning the independent countries to their respective spheres of influence. Thus the traditional Anglo-Russian rivalry gave way to the US-Soviet rivalry. In the post-Second World war years too Afghanistan has remained the focal point of super power rivalry. But until the advent of Soviet back communist coup in April 1978 in Kabul, Afghanistan maintained a chequered history of genuine nonalignment. Following the advent of communist coup, Kabul regime abandoned the traditional Afghan policy of genuine nonalignment and made Afghanistan as a client state of the Soviet Union. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 virtually made Kabul as a satellite of Soviet empire. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been condemned by the United Nations, nonaligned countries, members of the Islamic community, European Economic Community and other international forums.

When the deepening Afghanistan crisis has attracted the world wide attention, it has also formed the subject of serious academic research and general writing. There exists a plethora of literature which sheds ample light on Afghanistan from different perspectives. However there has been a paucity of serious academic literature which could shed analytical light on the action by one super power -- invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet Union, and reaction by other super power -- United States, to meet the challenge. Besides the existing available literature also does not present a dispassionate analysis of the response of the people of Afghanistan as to what they are struggling for, how they view the initiatives undertaken by the international community to meet the Soviet challenge etc.

All these aspects have been analysed in the present study which is divided into five main chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter traces out the emergence of Afghanistan as a modern state under Ahmad Shah Abdali in the second half of eighteenth century. The chapter is further subdivided into four parts. The first part deals with the period of consolidation of Afghan empire commencing from 1747 to 1800. The second part pertains to the period of foreign conflict which lasted from 1800 to 1880. The third part deals with the period of defensive isolationism which lasted for about four decades from 1880 to 1919. The final phase being identified as the period of defensive neutralism covers the period from the conclusion of the First World War to the conclusion of the Second World War.

During the first period between 1747 to 1800, the Afghan rulers consolidated the Afghan empire. By the time, Ahmad Shah

Abdali died in 1773, the Afghan empire extended from the Atrek river to the Indus and from Tibet to the Arabian Sea. This part of the first chapter further examines the rise of French power in Europe and its interest in the South West Asia which the British deemed as a threat to their rule in India. On the other hand the rise of Sikh power in Punjab which lasted upto the closing years of the third decade of the nineteenth century, had prevented any direct contact between British India and Afghanistan. Thus by the end of the eighteenth century Afghanistan continued its onward march on the road to progress uninterruptedly.

The chapter further proceeds to analyse the period of foreign conflict for Afghanistan which commenced with the dawn of nineteenth century and lasted for about eight decades. The rapid rise of Sikh power in Punjab was deemed as a threat to their interests in British India. Consequently during the first decade of the nineteenth century, the British made friendly overtures of friendship to the Afghan rulers with a view to secure the British interests against the possible threats from the Sikhs in Punjab and from Soviet Union. In 1809, both British India and Afghanistan signed a treaty in terms of which Afghanistan undertook to disallow French and Persian troops to pass through Afghan territory. However following the defeat of the then Afghan ruler Shah Shuja, the treaty could not be effected. Because of its borders with Soviet Union and Persia, Afghanistan had assumed immense strategic importance in British defence strategy with regard to consolidation and protection of British rule in India. In 1809 and 1814, the British signed two treaties with Persia now called Iran under which the latter assured the

British not to allow European forces to pass through its territory. However in the meanwhile, Soviet Union had also gained considerable diplomatic, political and economic leverage in the region by virtue of its treaties signed with Iran in 1828 and with Ottoman Empire of Turkey in 1829.

The chapter further analyses the growing Soviet influence in the region, its implications for the security of British India through Afghanistan and Iran. It further proceeds to assess the circumstances leading to the outbreak of First Anglo-Afghan War which took place in 1838 in which the British suffered heavily. The immediate impact of these developments was that the British followed a policy of non-intervention in Afghanistan for years. In view of the expanding Soviet influence during 1860s in Central Asia when Russia gathered control of Khiva, Khokand, Samarkand and later Bukhara, the British really became alarmed over the potential Soviet threat. The Anglo-Russian rivalry dragged on to the borders of Afghanistan especially when the British tried to dictate their terms to Afghanistan under the pretext of forward policy. In 1878 the British launched another armed expedition against Afghanistan which is known as the Second Anglo-Afghan War. In the aftermath of this war the British imposed the treaty of Gandamak on Afghanistan in May 1879 under which the Afghan foreign policy was subjected to British interference.

The chapter then deals with the third phase of defensive isolation in the Afghan foreign policy which lasted from 1880 till 1919. During this period Afghanistan asserted its national independence by pursuing a policy of strict neutrality. The Afghan rulers were very cautious about the implications of Anglo-Russian rivalry and thus refrained from being hoodwinked by either

great power.

When the First World War broke out, Afghanistan kept itself aloof from the power politics of great powers and did not favour the either belligerents. Afghanistan's steadfast pursuit of the policy of strict neutrality paid it good dividends.

The chapter finally deals with the fourth phase of defensive neutralism which began in 1919 and continued upto the end of the Second World War. In February 1919 Amir Amanullah became the new ruler of Afghanistan. He took steps to wriggle Afghanistan out of the British dominance and to pursue an independent foreign policy. In April May 1919, there occurred Third Anglo-Afghan War. The impact of the war was that the British recognized Afghanistan as an independent sovereign country.

The chapter makes an assessment of Afghan foreign policy under King Amanullah. Afghanistan's relations improved with its neighbours and with Turkey and Persia as well. Amanullah succeeded in asserting Afghanistan's independence in foreign affairs and secured the recognition of this assertion both from British and the Soviets. In 1921, Afghanistan and Soviet Union signed a treaty which recognized Afghan independence and neutrality.

It further analyses the foreign policy of Afghanistan under the regime of King Nadir Khan from 1929 to 1933. The hallmark of Afghanistan's foreign policy during this period was the determination to vigorously pursue the policy of neutrality.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Afghanistan had become heavily dependent on Axis powers especially Germany and Japan for economic and technical assistance. Keeping in view its traditional policy of maintaining strict neutrality, Afghanistan

declared in 1940 that it would remain neutral during the war. Thus Kabul ever abandoned the receipt of economic and technical assistance received from the Axis powers in the larger national interest. At the same time, Afghanistan also maintained neutral posture towards the Allied powers. Thus the pursuit of strict neutral policy by Afghanistan during the war period won it appreciation from the Allied powers and at the same time Afghanistan could also safeguard its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The second chapter deals with the basic postulates of Afghan foreign policy. After having analysed the significance of foreign policy for a country, the chapter further proceeds to assess the geo-political location of Afghanistan and its resultant impact on Afghan foreign policy. The faith of the people of Afghanistan in Islam and their sense of nationalism have been instrumental in influencing the course of Afghan foreign policy. The Afghan national character is reflected in the literature and culture of that country. Despite the ethnic and linguistic diversities there has always prevailed a cohesive national unity in Afghanistan.

Opposition to colonialism and neo-colonialism in all its manifestation is another postulate of Afghan foreign policy. The chapter further analyses the statements made by the Afghan representatives in the UN General Assembly on colonial issues. Afghanistan, because of its strong opposition to colonialism and active support for the United Nations efforts in the process of decolonization, was made a member of the Special Committee with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Full support to the national liberation movements struggling for the attainment of independence from the colonial domination has been another cornerstone of Afghan foreign policy. Afghanistan was the first country to recognize the freedom fighters of Algeria, when the latter was struggling for independence. Besides, Afghanistan has also rendered full support for the liberation movements in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola and has expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine in their struggle against Zionism.

Afghanistan has also consistently opposed the racial and apartheid policies of the white minority regime of South Africa. It keenly watched the developments within South Africa and supported the measures undertaken by the international community in this regard. In 1976, when the racist regime of South Africa resorted to massacres and massive repression against the innocent people, Afghanistan not only condemned them but expressed its wholehearted support to the legitimate struggle of the people of South Africa for self-determination and the eradication of the inhuman policy of the apartheid.

Afghanistan has also supported the people of Namibia in their struggle to attain independence from the racist regime of South Africa. After the First World War, the League of Nations had given the mandate over Namibia to the Union of South Africa. However after the Second World War, South Africa annexed the territory thus denying the independence to the people of Namibia. Rather Pretoria resorted to repressive measures. Afghanistan has frequently condemned the racial regime of Pretoria and supported the struggle of Namibian people.

Consistent and unqualified support to the people of Palestine in their just struggle against the Zionist Israel also constituted a basic trait of Afghan foreign policy. The problem of Palestine arose in 1947 when the UN General Assembly recommended the partition of Palestine into two -- home for the Palestinians and the home of the Jews. However the Zionists unilaterally declared the establishment of Israel in May 1948 and annexed even the territory meant for the Palestinians thus making the latter to live as refugees. Since 1948, the people of Palestine have been struggling to regain their territory from Israel. The Arab-Israel wars of 1967 and 1973 and continued hostilities have added to the miseries of the people of Palestine. The formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its recognition by the international community in 1974 as being the sole representative of the people of Palestine was welcomed by Afghanistan. Kabul also welcomed the admission of the PLO into the United Nations. Afghanistan has continuously reiterated that the total and complete withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including the right of self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian State were the only means of resolving the problem.

Afghanistan has consistently supported the right to self-determination in the United Nations and other international forums. Afghanistan, for the first time, suggested that the right to self-determination, which prior to that was incorporated as a political principle in the Charter of the United Nations and Universal Declaration on Human Rights to be treated as a

fundamental right. Consequently, the right to self-determination was incorporated in the first Article both in the UN Charter and the UN Covenant on Human Rights.

Afghanistan has continuously championed the cause of dependent people throughout the world and pleaded for the exercise of the right to self-determination.

Afghanistan has also strongly supported the New International Economic Order. The call for the NIEO was given by the Algerian NAM summit conference in 1973, which was later adopted as a Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order by the General Assembly at its sixth special session held in April 1974. Ever since then, Afghanistan has not only supported the NIEO but has also called for its early and speedy implementation. Kabul has also succeeded in focussing the attention of the world community to the economic problems faced by the landlocked countries.

Afghanistan has also rendered unqualified support for general and complete disarmament. Either in General Assembly or Disarmament Commission or any other international forum, Afghanistan has vigorously espoused the cause of disarmament. Afghanistan has strongly pleaded that the resources exhausted on the armaments could be diverted to envisage the economic well being of the people. Afghan support for the nuclear disarmament measures undertaken by the United Nations has been lauded.

The chapter further proceeds to analyse the policy of nonalignment pursued by Afghanistan. Pursuit of the policy of

strict neutrality and genuine nonalignment has been the hallmark of Afghanistan policy. Even at a time when Afghanistan was sandwiched between British India and Soviet Union and being the focal point of Anglo-Russian rivalry, the rulers of Afghanistan followed the policy of strict neutrality and tried to maintain friendly relations with all countries. Afghanistan is the oldest nonaligned country in Asia which played a notable role along with other countries in convening the first summit conference of the nonaligned countries at Belgrade in 1961. Afghanistan not only participated in the NAM Summit Conference but also played a constructive role in furthering the cause of nonalignment. Until the fifth NAM summit held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1976, Afghanistan had striven hard to continue its active role in espousing the cause of nonalignment. By the time the sixth NAM summit was held in Havana, Cuban capital, Afghanistan's status as a nonaligned country had been vastly eroded in the wake of the advent of Soviet back communist regime in Kabul in April 1978. The present day Afghanistan is a client state of Soviet Union and no more a nonaligned country.

The chapter finally deals with the Afghan objective of strengthening the United Nations. Afghanistan is one of the founding members of the United Nations and it has played a positive and constructive role by active participation in the various organs of the world community. Though being a country with limited resources Afghanistan could not contribute economically in a big way but it has rendered moral support to the United Nations important decisions having bearing on the international peace and security.

The third chapter presents an indepth assessment of Afghanistan's relations with the Soviet Union since the conclusion of the Second World War till the advent of Soviet-backed Communist coup in Kabul in late April 1978. The chapter begins with the declaration of the then Afghan Prime Minister, Shah Mahmud, made in May 1946 in which he declared that the principles of establishing friendly relations with all countries, especially with the neighbouring countries, formed the bedrock of Afghan foreign policy. On 13 June 1946, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union signed an agreement to define the Amu River border.

It further proceeds to analyse the developments leading to the partition of Indian subcontinent in August 1947 which led to the emergence of India and Pakistan as two independent and sovereign countries and their impact on Afghanistan. The emergence of Pakistan gave rise to the issue of Pushtunistan as an apple of discord between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In July 1949, Afghanistan abrogated all of its international treaties which supported the Durand Line as a border or which referred to the status of the Pushtuns. The detailed analysis of the Pushtunistan issue is not undertaken in this chapter but only referred to briefly in the context of Afghan-Soviet relations. However, Moscow supported the Afghan stand on Pushtunistan.

In July 1950, Moscow and Kabul signed a four year trade agreement which envisaged Soviet petroleum products, cotton cloth, sugar and other commodities in exchange for

Afghan goods like wool, fur, raw cotton, fruits and nuts. In January 1954, Kabul and Moscow signed a major agreement in terms of which the Soviets advanced a loan of \$ 3.5 million for the construction of grain elevators at Kabul. During 1954, Soviet Union advanced a loan worth \$ 5.3 million to Afghanistan under different agreements.

The chapter then proceeds to analyse the visit of Soviet leaders - Khrushchev and Bulganin to Afghanistan in December 1955 and its influence on Soviet-Afghan relations. During their visit, the Soviet leaders affirmed their support to Afghanistan on Pushtun issue. This visit resulted in procuring a Soviet credit worth \$ 100 million for Afghanistan to be repaid in thirty years at two per cent interest. In terms of an agreement signed in March 1956, regular air flights between Tashkent and Kabul were started.

The chapter then proceeds to analyse the visit of Afghan Premier, Sardar Mohammad Daoud to Soviet Union in October 1956. Then in July 1957 the Afghan King Zahir Shah visited Soviet Union. During this period, Moscow promised Kabul to advance a credit worth \$ 15 million. The chapter also deals with the augmentation of Soviet military influence in Afghanistan during 1950s. In August 1956, Soviet Union offered military assistance to Afghanistan as well as to impart military training to Afghan personnel. Between 1950 to 1959, the Soviet assistance to Afghanistan amounted to \$ 246.2 million. The underlying objective of Soviet economic and military assistance to Afghanistan was to gain a foothold in that country to perpetrate its long term strategic gains.

In March 1960, the Soviet Premier, Nikita S. Khrushchev paid an official visit to Afghanistan which proved instrumental in the conclusion of a cultural agreement between the two countries. The chapter's assessment about the Afghan foreign policy during 1953-63 when Sardar Mohammad Daoud was the Prime Minister, is that Soviet Union did render considerable economic assistance to woo Afghanistan to its fold, however, the latter did not fall a prey to Soviet overtures and pursued an independent and genuinely nonaligned foreign policy.

Between 1963-73, the Soviet-Afghan relations continued on the friendly pattern. There was no major point at departure in the traditionally friendly relationship. In February 1968, Moscow and Kabul signed an agreement for economic and technical assistance. The chapter further examines the Soviet proposal for collective security in Asia advanced by Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in June 1968 and again enunciated in March 1972. However Afghanistan did not endorse the Soviet proposal for collective security in Asia.

The third chapter finally makes an assessment of Afghan-Soviet relations from July 1973 to April 1978 during which Sardar Mohammad Daoud was at the helm of Afghan affairs. In early June 1974, Daoud visited Soviet Union. During 1974, Moscow granted an interest free ten years moratorium on a \$ 100 million debt and promised another \$ 428 million in development aid to Afghanistan. In December 1975, the Soviet President, Podgorny, visited Afghanistan. During 1974-75, Moscow tried to increase its sphere of influence in Afghanistan but Daoud was cautious enough to foresee such an eventuality as detrimental to Afghanistan. Consequently Daoud forged close

relations with nonaligned and Islamic countries to reduce Afghan economic dependence on Moscow. The Daoud regime was wooed by Soviet Union but Kabul did not encourage Moscow. The resultant impact was the "cool off" stage in Afghan-Soviet relations during 1977 and the early months of 1978.

The fourth chapter provides a critical assessment of the Afghan-US relations since their advent till April 1978. Though the formal diplomatic relations between Kabul and Washington were established in 1940s but efforts in this direction were initiated during King Amanullah's time. In July 1921, an Afghan mission headed by Mohammed Wali Khan visited the United States to explore the possibilities of establishing diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and the United States. Despite his frequent meetings with the US officials and leaders, Wali Khan's mission failed to get positive assurance. For subsequent four years, neither Washington nor Kabul took any initiative to resume negotiations on establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries. The negotiations resumed in 1925 continued for about a decade without any tangible outcome. It was in March 1936 that the United States recognized the Afghan Government and on 4 May 1936 that Hornbybrook was accredited as the first US ambassador to Kabul with his headquarters at Tehran.

The outbreak of Second World War adversely affected the Afghan exports of Karakul to the West European countries. At this crucial juncture, the United States came to Afghanistan's rescue to help it export its Karakul in American markets. Despite the establishment of diplomatic ties between Washington and Kabul, the former had not yet opened any diplomatic mission

in Afghanistan by the end of 1940. It was on 6 June 1942 that the US diplomatic mission was inaugurated in Kabul. During the period of Second World War, the Afghan-US relations had become friendly and formal. Immediately after the conclusion of the Second World War, the Afghan Government asked the United States to send American teachers and engineers. In 1946, the Afghan Government signed an agreement with the Morrison-Knudsen Company of the United States worth \$ 17 million for repairing the dams and their reconstruction and the construction of 350 miles long highway.

In 1949, the Afghan Government urged the US to provide economic assistance worth \$ 118 million. However, Washington sanctioned only a loan of \$ 21 million. At this stage, the Afghan request for arms supplies was not accepted by the United States. The US reluctance to provide substantial economic assistance and to supply of arms to Afghanistan showed that Washington had attached no strategic importance to Afghanistan during the early 1950s. The US foreign policy during the Dulles era of early 1950s led to the negligence of Afghanistan and the latter had to meet its defence requirements by procuring arms mainly from the Soviet Union. The consequential impact of these developments was the augmentation of Soviet influence in Afghanistan. During 1956-57, United States provided economic and technical assistance worth \$ 14.4 million to Afghanistan.

The chapter further proceeds to analyse the impact of Prime Minister Daud's visit to the United States in late June and early July 1958, on Afghan-US relations. The US Government evinced interest in the development of Afghan civil aviation, the Helmand Valley, surface transportation projects etc. In

December 1959, the US President Eisenhower, paid a short visit to Afghanistan and exchanged views on bilateral issues with Afghan leaders.

Subsequently in early September 1963, the Afghan King, Zahir Shah, visited the United States. Afghanistan was assured of US economic assistance to help develop Afghan economy. The United States praised Afghanistan's pursuit of the policy of nonalignment. During March-April 1967, the Afghan Premier Mohammad Hashim Mainwandwal visited the United States. The Afghan Premier exchanged views on regional and global issues with the US leaders and the latter appreciated Afghanistan's steadfast commitment to the policy of nonalignment. In July 1967, both countries concluded an agreement for the sale of agricultural commodities.

In early January 1970, the then US Vice President, Spiro Agnew visited Afghanistan. The US Vice President said that his country was interested in the overall development of Afghanistan. He also assured Afghan leaders of continued US support.

The fourth chapter further analyses the visit of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Afghanistan in November 1974 and its impact on Afghan-US relations. Both the leaders while sharing the identical views on global issues reiterated their determination to further consolidate the bonds of friendly relations between the two countries. In early August 1976, Henry Kissinger again visited Afghanistan and held discussions on bilateral and global issues with the Afghan leaders. The US Secretary of State reiterated his government's desire to participate closely in Afghanistan's economic development. The fourth chapter finally concludes that the pattern of Afghan-US

relations remained friendly until April 1978 when the Soviet-backed communist coup was staged in Kabul.

The fifth chapter critically examines the advent of Soviet-backed communist regime in April 1978. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the international response to get the Soviet aggression vacated. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) with the Soviet-backing seized power in Kabul on 27 April 1978 by overthrowing the government headed by Sardar Mohammad Daoud. Noor Mohammad Taraki became the new Prime Minister of Afghanistan and Hafizullah Amin and Babrak Karmal were two other most prominent leaders. The pronouncements made by the Taraki regime in early May 1978 had made it evident that the post-coup Kabul was toeing pro-Moscow line in the realm of foreign affairs.

The chapter further analyses the attitude of United States to the Taraki regime. There was no immediate response by the United States to the April 1978 coup in Kabul. The media in the US reacted very sharply to developments in Kabul but there was no official US reaction.

The Soviet response to Taraki regime was very encouraging. On 3 May 1978, Moscow recognized the new regime in Kabul. The pronouncements made by Moscow and Kabul showed the mutual desire of both countries to forge close relations. In early December 1978, Kabul and Moscow signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Under this treaty, though Moscow was not bound to prevent the downfall of the new communist regime in Afghanistan, it was already preparing the possibility of saving it from failure and keeping that country under Soviet influence even by force if needed.

On 14 February 1979, the US Ambassador in Kabul Adolph Dubs, was assassinated by some unidentified persons. The communist regime in Kabul held its opponents responsible for Dubs' assassination while the Western and US media blamed the Taraki regime. This incident led to the deterioration in Afghan-US relations and by August 1979, Washington suspended all economic and technical assistance to Kabul.

In September 1979, Hafizullah Amin assumed the reins of power following Taraki's ouster. Both Soviet leaders as well as Amin had harboured distrust towards each other since the emergence of Amin at the helm of affairs. Amin also served Soviet interests. There was no change in US policy when Hafizullah Amin assumed the reins of power in Kabul. Though overtly, Amin tried to convince the United States of his desire to improve the relations while he continued pushing Afghanistan into Soviet orbit. The United States expressed concern over the violation of human rights in Afghanistan.

The chapter further proceeds to analyse the developments leading to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 28 December 1979. The Soviet forces in tens of thousands invaded Afghanistan in December end 1979 and help install Babrak Karmal as the new head of communist regime in Kabul. The Soviet media justified Soviet military aggression of Afghanistan on the plea that the Afghan Government "requested" Moscow to send their armed forces and the latter complied it. The emergence of Karmal regime backed by Soviet forces pushed Afghanistan into Soviet orbit and its nonaligned status was completely undermined.

The chapter then proceeds to analyse the US response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. During the first few days

preceding the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Washington watched with keen interest the Afghan developments. It was during the first week of January 1980, the Carter Administration swung into action to oppose and criticise Moscow for its military adventures in Kabul. On 4 January 1980, the Carter Administration imposed some sanctions against Soviet Union which included blockade of supply of US grains to Moscow; stopping of sale of high technology and boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. The United States implemented these sanctions but its other allies were reluctant. However the Soviet media was critical of US sanctions. The Carter Administration called upon the Soviet Union to vacate its aggression from Afghanistan.

Following the advent of Reagan Administration in Washington in 1981, the US policy toward Soviet Union on the issue of Afghanistan became more critical and practical. The main elements of President Reagan's policy towards Afghan crisis included humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees seeking shelter in Pakistan, diplomatic support for a political settlement along the lines of the United Nations Resolution and the resolutions passed by the Islamic Conference and Nonaligned Summit Conference. The chapter also presents a detailed analysis of the pronouncements made by the US representatives in the UN General Assembly, Senators and Congressmen and the media on Afghan crisis. The US President has designed 21 March as "Afghanistan Day" to express the solidarity of the United States with the people of Afghanistan in their just struggle against Soviet invasion. The US support has been instrumental in boosting the morale of Afghan freedom fighters.

The chapter further analyses the response of the United Nations to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In early January 1980, a six-power draft resolution was introduced in the UN Security Council. The resolution avoided "condemnation" of Soviet military adventure in Afghanistan and called "for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan". However the Soviet Union vetoed it and consequently the question of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan came up before the UN General Assembly. The draft resolution on Afghanistan was adopted by the General Assembly with overwhelming majority on 14 January 1980 with 104 in favour, 18 against and with 18 abstentions. The resolution deplored the armed intervention into Afghanistan as inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and called for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign troops. Again on 20 November 1980, the General Assembly adopted another resolution which was mild in its criticism of armed intervention into Afghanistan. The chapter makes an assessment of these resolutions passed by the General Assembly on Afghanistan and finds them similar in contents on which Soviet Union has not even cared to think.

The chapter also examines the Geneva Talks on Afghanistan which came into the offing in June 1982 in pursuance of the resolutions passed by the General Assembly. The UN Secretary General deputed his Special Representative to hold proximity talks with the Afghan Government, Pakistan and Iran to find out means for defusing the Afghan crisis. The Special Representative has held various rounds of talks with the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan while Iran has preferred to be kept

informed. The Geneva talks have veered round four main points -- withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, non-interference in the internal affairs of states; international guarantees of non-interference; and voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their homes. There has been no outcome of Geneva talks as yet.

The chapter further proceeds to analyse the response of the Organization of Islamic Conference to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The extraordinary session of the Foreign Ministers of the OIC in its session held in January end 1980 at Islamabad (Pakistan) condemned Soviet Union by name for invading Afghanistan and called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan. Besides, the Conference also suspended the membership of Afghanistan. However the subsequent resolutions passed by the OIC on Afghanistan issue failed to mention Soviet Union by name but called for the unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

The response of the European Economic Community (EEC) to Soviet invasion in Afghanistan is also analysed in this chapter. The EEC in its various resolutions passed since 1980 has expressed grave concern over the military operations by Soviet troops in Afghanistan and has called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and restoration of latter's nonaligned and independent status.

The chapter finally makes an assessment of the response of the nonaligned movement (NAM) to Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the nonaligned countries held in February 1981 at New Delhi expressed concern over developments in Afghanistan and called for the withdrawal of

"foreign troops" from Afghanistan. The similar stance has been reiterated by the seventh NAM summit held in 1983 at New Delhi and the eighth NAM summit held in 1986 at Harare (Zimbabwe).

The final chapter of the present study is in the form of conclusion which critically examines the present state of affairs prevailing in Afghanistan in the wake of the continued presence of hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops in Afghanistan and the struggle waged by the Afghan freedom fighters to liberate their homeland from Soviet occupation. The Soviet Union being a super power and the founding member of the United Nations owns a special responsibility in maintaining international peace and security. But the unprovoked and unwarranted invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet Union is in utter violation of the existing norms and practices of the international law and the provisions of the UN Charter.

The study suggests that the resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly should strongly condemn the Soviet Union by name as an aggressor and ensure the complete, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet military and civilian personnel from Afghanistan. Besides, the nonaligned, independent and sovereign status of Afghanistan should be restored. It further observes that the Geneva talks are a futile exercise because neither of the belligerents -- Soviet Union as an invader and Afghan Mujahideen as defender are party to it. Thus it suggests the participation of the Afghan Mujahideen as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Afghanistan in the UN General Assembly and Geneva talks in order to facilitate an acceptable

solution of the Afghan problem. The study also calls upon the EEC, Organization of Islamic Conference, NAM and other international organizations to amend their resolutions on Afghanistan by strongly condemning the Soviet Union by name as an invader and call for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet military and civilian personnel from Afghanistan. The study also suggests that the United States, another super power should impose strict economic, diplomatic and political sanctions against the Soviet Union to compel the latter to vacate the invasion.

It has also suggested the various resistance groups of Afghan freedom fighters to close their ranks and forge unity. The study further makes the suggestion that the member countries of the NAM, Islamic Community and the United Nations should suggest and support the holding of an international conference on Afghanistan in which all the permanent members of the Security Council and the representatives of all the political parties of Afghanistan, including the Communist Party of Afghanistan as a political party, should be invited to find a political solution of Afghan problem. The study finally suggests the formation of "Afghan Government in exile" which should be recognized by the freedom loving people of the world. Unless the political solution to Afghanistan problem is had, the Government in exile should work as the true representative of the people of Afghanistan.



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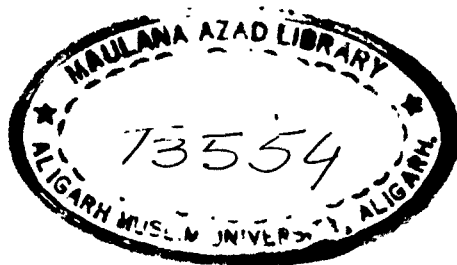
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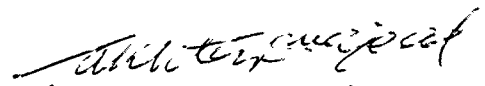
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This is to certify that the thesis
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has fulfilled the requirements of attendance etc.


(AKHTAR MAJEED)
Supervisor

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PREFACE

Existence of a small nation in a multipolar world strewn with power rivalry between the Super Powers presents an interesting study of interaction of geopolitical forces in international relations. Such a study assumes added significance when it pertains to Afghanistan which has been subject to Super Power rivalry since centuries and, since December 1979, it has been the victim of Soviet invasion. Afghanistan, which shares common border with Soviet Union, had been subject to Anglo-Russian rivalry for about fifteen decades. In the wake of the emergence of cold war in the immediate aftermath of the conclusion of the Second World War, the Soviet-United States rivalry also spread its tentacles towards Afghanistan but, like the past, the rulers of Afghanistan maintained the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan by pursuing the policy of strict neutrality and genuine nonalignment.

However, the traumatic political events leading to the advent of Soviet-backed communist coup in Kabul in April 1978 had triggered the process of rapid Soviet infiltration into Afghanistan which culminated in the Soviet invasion of that country in December 1979. Since then hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops are present in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion was and has been opposed by the people of Afghanistan. Six million Afghans are living as refugees in Pakistan, Iran and other countries. The Afghan freedom fighters, also known as

AfghanMajahideen, are giving a tough resistance to the occupying forces.

Thus, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the continued presence of Soviet troops in that country has been the focus of strategic thinkers, policy makers, academicians, journalists and freedom loving people throughout the world. The resultant impact has been the appearance of plethora of literature on various aspects of Afghanistan. The bulk of literature available on the subject deals with the analysis of the developments leading to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This literature comprises the works of Western academicians and journalists who have written research-oriented books and articles. A close scrutiny of the available literature reveals that many pertinent questions have remained unanswered. The questions like when a Super Power invades a nonaligned country like Afghanistan, and how the other Super Power reacts to it, how a small and nonaligned country like Afghanistan can exist in the wake of severe Super Power rivalry; and how the international community has responded in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. All these questions have been deeply examined in the present study.

The author owes his intellectual debt to his supervisor, Dr. Akhtar Majeed, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University whose able guidance and constant encouragement enabled the author to sift chaff from the grain. His profound expertize on South and Southwest Asia and the Indian Ocean enabled me to understand the subtle

implications of Super Power rivalry for Afghanistan in a better way. The author is also grateful to Dr. S.A.H. Bilgrami, Professor and Chairman, Department of Political Science, AMU, for his keen interest and encouragement. I also owe my gratitude to Professor A.F. Usman, Professor in the Department of Political Science, for his benign cooperation and encouragement. My thanks also go to my other teachers at AMU whose profound knowledge and experience enabled me to sharpen my tools of learning.

I am also intellectually indebted to Abdur Rahman Pazhwak, the outstanding statesman and seasoned diplomat of Afghanistan who has served as Permanent Afghan Representative to the United Nations, as Afghan Ambassador to the United Kingdom, West Germany and India, for his valuable comments on the various complex aspects of Afghanistan's foreign policy. I have also greatly benefitted from his writings. Despite his preoccupations, he has been kind enough to answer some of my queries which have unfolded unto me the great reservoir of his dispassionate analysis and deep understanding of Afghan diplomacy. The impact of his learning looms large in the present study.

I am also beholden to Dr. Zamin Momand, an expert on Afghan diplomacy, currently with the Voice of America, Washington D.C., for his constant encouragement and valuable comments on various aspects of Afghan diplomacy. I feel obliged to Zakaria Ferotan, a research scholar of Delhi

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Finally, a word about the spellings of Afghan names. The name of A.R. Pazhwak is spelled out as Abdur Rahman Pazhwak and as Abdul Rahman Pazhwak. Both spellings are commonly used. Besides the name "Mahmood" is generally written as Mahmood or Mahmud but for the purpose of the present study, the spellings retained are as "Mahmud". Similarly, the word Mohammad is also spelled as Mohammed, but the former spellings have been retained for the purpose of the present study.

M. Khalid

(MOHAMMAD KHALID)

Chapter I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter endeavours to analyse the evolution of Afghan foreign policy since the emergence of modern Afghanistan in 1747 till the conclusion of the Second World War, with special reference to Afghanistan's relations with the contemporary great powers -- Russia and Britain and Afghan response to them. In other words, it will be an analysis of the challenges posed by Anglo-Russian rivalry and its impact on Afghan foreign policy.

The word "Afghan" is the national name of all the peoples of Afghanistan which symbolizes an indivisible unit under all historical, economic and social conditions in the heart of Asia.¹ According to Hasan Kawun Kakar, a noted Afghan scholar, Afghanistan has had three principal names -- Aryana in antiquity, Khurasan in the medieval era and Afghanistan in modern times.² Modern Afghanistan is almost co-extensive with the land mentioned in the old Greek as Ariana, in the old Persian as Airya or Airyana, in Sanskrit as Arya-Vartta or Arya-Varsha and in Zeud as Eriene-Veejo. Situated between India and Persia, Aryana was a geographical and cultural rather than political name.³ The name Aryana lasted for about 1,500 years from

1 A.H. Habibi, "Afghans and Afghanistan", Afghanistan (Kabul), vol. XXII, no. 2, Summer 1969, p. 1.

2 Hasan Kawun Kakar, Government and Society in Afghanistan : The Reign of Amir Abdal-Rahman Khan (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), p. xv.

3 Ibid., p. xvi.

1000 B.C. to the fifth century of the Christian Era. The word Khurasan, denoting the "land of the rising sun" gained currency during the second century of the Christian Era. According to Mir Ghulam Muhammad Ghobar, an eminent Afghan historian, "for fourteen centuries Khurasan was applied initially to parts of Afghanistan and later to the whole country and is still in use for a small region to the northwest of it".⁴ Even upto the nineteenth century the name Khurasan, signifying Afghanistan was in vogue along with the words Pashtunkhwa and Sarhad.⁵ Thus it was only toward the end of the nineteenth century that "the appellation Afghanistan replaced the word Khurasan completely".⁶ According to Hasan K. Kakar, Afghanistan is not a new name and "it is generally believed to have appeared with the accession of Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747".⁷ This view has also been supported by A.R. Pazhwak, a seasoned Afghan statesman. He writes: "Afghanistan is not the original name of this country but a term which gained currency in usage when Ahmad Shah Durrani united the various principalities under one political entity in 1747".⁸ According to available evidence the word "Afghanistan" was applied in a political sense to

4 For details see, Ghulam Muhammad Ghobar, Khurasan (Kabul: History Association, 1946).

5 Mountstuart Elphinstone, An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), p. 200.

6 Kakar, n. 2, p. xvi.

7 Ibid.

8 A.R. Pazhwak, Aryana : Ancient Afghanistan (London: Royal Embassy of Afghanistan, 1957), pp. 5-6.

a land for the first time in the third decade of the fourteenth century by Saifi Herawi.⁹ A detailed analysis of this etymological controversy is beyond the scope of the present study and it deems suffice to say that Afghanistan is an ancient country whose history dates back to over five thousand years.

The anthropological excavations undertaken in the early decades of the present century in Afghanistan revealed that Palaeolithic man probably lived in the caves of northern Afghanistan as long as 50,000 years ago. According to Louis Dupree, "Post-World War II excavations in south-central Afghanistan point to intimate relationships with the Indus Valley Civilization fourth-second millennia B.C."¹⁰

References to Afghanistan recur in the ancient Vedic literature and subsequent travelogues of foreign travellers. The reference to Afghanistan as Avagana occurs in Varaha Mishra's Bhrita Sanhita. This view has been supported by A. Foucher, a noted French scholar.¹¹ The works of Al Beiruni and Hsuen Tsang also mention about Afghanistan.

The advent of Islam during the seventh century in Afghanistan proved instrumental in overhauling the entire

9 Saifi Herawi, Risala-i-Tarqiq-i-Qismat-i-Ab-i-Qalb (The Irrigation of Herat), edited by Magil T. Herawi (Tehran, 1968), p. 77.

10 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. xviii.

11 A. Foucher, The Ancient Way of India and Bactre to Taxila (Paris, 1947), pp. 235-52.

culture and civilization of Afghanistan.¹² Islam which brought about an overall change in the social, cultural and historical development of Afghanistan also forged a new religious and cultural bonds - bonds that to a certain extent overrode the prevalent ethnic diversities.¹³

The advent of Islam in Afghanistan was followed by the conquest by Arabs who reached Kabul and Kandhar during the seventh century. The Muslim conquest brought Afghanistan within a greater political entity, stimulated trade in the region and preserved the country's geographic importance as a crossroad between India, Central Asia and the Mediterranean world.¹⁴

For about two centuries the local dynasties ruled over Afghanistan -- Tahirids (820-70), and the Samanids (874-999). The closing years of the tenth century witnessed the advent of regime of Sabuk-tagin in Afghanistan who was succeeded by his son Mahmud Ghaznavi who ruled over Afghanistan till 1157 A.D. The Ghaznavi's empire extended over Kabul, Balkh, Badakhshan, Persian Khorasan and some parts of India.¹⁵ Following the collapse of Ghaznavi rule, the central authority in Afghanistan passed on to the local forces. The

12 For details see, Pazhwak, n. 8, pp. 77-91.

13 T.W. Arnold and A. Guillaume, The Legacy of Islam (Oxford, 1936), p. 79.

14 Vartan Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 14.

15 G.N. Molesworth, Afghanistan 1919 (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), p. 3.

16 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 15.

Mongol invasion brought economic disaster for Afghanistan during the thirteenth century. During the fourteenth century Afghanistan was invaded by Taimurlane and the early decades of the sixteenth century witnessed the establishment of Mughal rule in Kabul by Babur, a descendant of Timur, in 1504.

Following the death of Babur which led to the collapse of Mughal rule in Afghanistan, the local tribes again vied for establishing their paramountcy in Afghanistan. During this period, Afghanistan was divided "between the empires of Persia and Mughal India, the northern tribes being under Mughal rule".¹⁷ The Afghan nationalism found its early seedlings during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the inspiration of Roshania movement and Khushal Khan Khattak (1613-89) who inspired the Afghan tribes to "defend their independence and strive for political unity".¹⁸

The geo-political situation in the region underwent a substantial change and the early period of eighteenth century witnessed the southern Afghan tribes led by Ghilzais rise in revolt against Persia which in later years spread to Herat and southeast of Persia. However the revolt was quelled by the then Persian King, Nadir Shah, whose assassination in 1747 provided an opportunity to the Abdalis under the leadership of Ahmad Khan Abdali to declare the independence of Afghanistan. During the same year, Ahmad Shah Abdali was made the King of Afghanistan. The succeeding pages present an analysis of Afghan foreign

17 Molesworth, n. 15, p. 4.

18 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 43.

policy since its emergence as an independent modern State in 1747 till the conclusion of the Second World War with special reference to contemporary great powers. Adamec has divided the period between 1747 till the end of Second World War into the following four phases:

- (A) The Period of Consolidation (1747 to 1800)
- (B) The Period of Foreign Conflict (1800 to 1880)
- (C) The Period of Defensive Isolationism (1880 to 1919)
- (D) The Period of Defensive Neutralism (1919 till the end of Second World War). 19

The above classification envisaged by Adamec is retained for the purpose of present study.

(A) The Period of Consolidation : 1747 to 1800

Ahmad Shah Abdali after assuming the reins of power, consolidated his position and took measures to strengthen his empire. In this direction, he led eight expeditions into India. In their first expedition launched in 1748, however, the Afghan forces could not go beyond the Indus.²⁰ In his subsequent expeditions, the Afghan King was able to incorporate Punjab, Kashmir and Multan into his empire. At the time of his death in 1773, the Afghan empire of Ahmad Shah Abdali extended from Atrek river to the Indus and from Tibet to the Arabian Sea.²¹

19 Ludwig W. Adamec, Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to the Mid-Twentieth Century (Tucson: Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 1974), p. 2.

20 G.P. Tate, The Kingdom of Afghanistan (Bombay: Times of India Press, 1911), p. 71.

21 Sultan Mohammad Khan, Tarikh-i-Afghanistan (n.d.), p. 27.

Timur Shah succeeded after the death of his father in 1773 as the new ruler of Afghanistan. Two decades of Timur Shah's rule over Afghanistan witnessed no major change in Afghan domestic and external policies but continuation of the legacy.

The closing years of the eighteenth century witnessed the rise of a powerful France evincing interest in the countries of South-West and Central Asia. The British, whose power in India had been in ascendancy since the establishment of the East India Company in the beginning of the seventeenth century, were also planning to augment their political power and expand their trade and commerce in and beyond Afghanistan. This period also "witnessed the beginning of that interesting epoch when the diplomatic rivalries of the European powers became clear cut on the chess-board of Central Asia".²²

Zaman Shah (1793-99) who succeeded Timur Shah as the King of Afghanistan continued the policy of his father and grandfather. The external threats to Afghanistan during this period had increased. The growing power and expansion of the British in India and Persian plans to reassert its sovereignty over Herat portended threat to Afghanistan. According to Vartan Gregorian, "Afghanistan thus entered the nineteenth century a politically disunited ... state".²³

22 Asghar H. Bilgrami, Afghanistan and British India 1793-1907 (New Delhi : Sterling Publishers, 1972), p. 13.

23 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 51.

(B) The Period of Foreign Conflict, 1800-1880

The onset of the nineteenth century envisaged an era of foreign conflicts for Afghanistan. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, the British signed a treaty with the Sikh ruler of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh on 25 April 1809 under which the British acquired a right of passage for their army through the Sikh territories in case of foreign aggression and the Sikhs undertook to help the British in their task of defence.²⁴ This treaty was motivated by two factors. In the first place, by the growing possibility of a French invasion of India in 1808 and, secondly, to check the growing Sikh power to secure the British power in India.

During this period, the British were facing threat to their power locally from Marathas and the Sikhs. In the scheme of their defence strategy, the British made friendly gestures to the then Afghan ruler, Shah Shuja, and a British mission under Mountstuart Elphinstone left for Kabul on 13 October 1808.²⁵ The Elphinstone Mission tried to raise the issue of French and Russian threat to Afghanistan as well as India and wanted Shah Shuja to contract an alliance but were reluctant to help the Afghan King in his internal challenge which threatened the throne.²⁶ However the Afghans were shrewd enough to discover the British

24 For full text of the treaty see, C.U. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and the Neighbouring Countries (Calcutta : Government Printing Press, 1909), vol. VIII, p. 44.

25 Bilgrami, n. 22, p. 35.

26 Aitchison, n. 24, vol. XI, p. 309.

designs and regarded "an alliance for the purpose of repelling one enemy was imperfect and that true friendship between the two states could only be maintained by identifying their interests in all cases".²⁷

Despite the differing approaches, the British India and Afghanistan signed a treaty in June 1809 in terms of which Afghanistan undertook to prevent the passage through Afghanistan of French and Persian troops on their way to India and the British Government pledged to pay the Afghans for their services against the confederacy. Besides Afghanistan was to exclude all Frenchmen from its territory.²⁸ However, following the defeat of Shah Shuja by Shah Mahmud, the treaty became almost a dead letter.

Afghanistan, because of its borders with Russia and Persia,²⁹ had assumed immense strategic importance in British defence strategy with regard to consolidation and protection of British rule in India. The Russians had started showing interest in Persia during this period. Besides, the growing French power was also deemed as a threat by the British. Consequently the British signed two treaties in 1809 and 1814 with Persia. Under the terms of the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1809, Persia agreed "not to permit any European force whatever to pass through Persia either towards India or towards the

27 Ibid.

28 For text of the Treaty, see *ibid.*, vol. XIII, pp. 53-55.

29 The name Persia is used for Iran here because the official use of name "Iran" was started only in 1937. Hence prior to that reference is made to Persia in the present study.

ports of that country".³⁰ Persia also promised to afford a force for the protection of British dominions in case of attack from Afghanistan or any other country. The British Government in return agreed to "afford to the Shah [Persian King] a force, or in lieu of it, a subsidy, with warlike ammunition such as guns, muskets etc..."³¹ Similarly the Anglo-Persian treaty of 1814 envisaged for a Persian attack against Afghanistan in the event Afghans invaded India.³²

On the other hand, Russia had gained considerable diplomatic, political and economic gains in the region by virtue of two treaties -- the Treaty of Turkmanchai signed with Persia in 1828 and the Treaty of Adrianople signed with the Ottoman Empire in 1829. Under the terms of the Treaty of Turkmanchai, Persia surrendered its all territories west of the Caspian Sea to Russia. These developments proved instrumental in changing British strategy towards Iran as well as Afghanistan. It regarded any Persian encroachment or gain at the expense of Afghanistan as tantamount to an extension of Russia's political and economic gains on the doorstep of India.³³

30 For text of the treaty of 1809, see Aitchison, n. 24, vol. XIII (Calcutta : Government of India Publication Branch, 1933), pp. 53-55.

31 Ibid.

32 For text of Anglo-Persian treaty of 1814, see, *ibid.*, p. 54. Also see J.C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and the Middle East: A Documentary Survey 1535-1914 (New York, 1956), vol. I, pp. 86-88.

33 Philip E. Mosley, Russian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Eastern Question 1838-9 (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 3-4.

Lord Ellenborough, a then top ranking British official, had opined that Russia could enter India via Afghanistan. He further added: "Russian commerce would be utilized to prepare the way for Russian armies in Afghanistan".³⁴ Thus, the Russian factor was the major determinant of British policies towards Afghanistan and Persia. Lord Palmerston, the then British Foreign Secretary was of the view that "a pro-British power in Afghanistan could influence officers in Persia in which Russia was deeply interested".³⁵

The British Governor-General in India, Lord Auckland, was advised by London to conclude political or commercial agreements with Afghanistan:

The time has arrived when it will be right for you to interfere, decidedly in the affairs of Afghanistan. Such an interference would doubtless be requisite either to prevent the extension of Persian dominion in that quarter or to raise a timely barrier against impending encroachments of Russian influence. ³⁶

Consequently Lord Auckland sent his emissary Alexander Burnes to Kabul in November 1836 with the objective of securing political and commercial advantages without conceding any strategic concessions to Afghanistan.

The First Anglo-Afghan War

Realizing that the British were not going to get the desired concessions from the then Afghan ruler, Amir Dost

34 H.W.C. Davis, "The Great Game in Asia : 1800-1844", Proceedings of the British Academy (Oxford, 1926), p. 230.

35 Vincent A. Smith, ed., Oxford History of India (Third edn.) (Oxford, 1958), p. 591.

36 Ibid., p. 603.

Mohammad, they tried to cultivate Shah Shuja who was then living in exile in India with the promise to restore him his throne. Efforts were also made to enlist the support of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab. During that period, Persia was planning to invade Herat. However in November 1838, the British foiled Persian attempts to invade Herat and forced the latter to accept a hands-off policy in regard to Herat.³⁷ Subsequently the British also concluded a treaty with Shah Kamran, the ruler of Herat in August 1839,³⁸ thus making Herat an exclusive British sphere of influence. This move seemed to be the part of overall British policy of bringing Afghanistan under British sphere of influence in the wake of growing Russian influence in the neighbouring countries of Central Asia. The Russians, who had gained considerable economic stakes in Central Asia between 1758 and 1858, considered a pro-British or English dominated Afghanistan a serious threat to their interests in the region.³⁹ Thus both British and Russians were apprehensive of each other over Afghanistan.

In the meanwhile, in October 1838, the then Governor-General of India, Lord Auckland, issued a "Manifesto" accusing the Afghan ruler, Dost Mohammad of taking measures prejudicial

37 John William Kaye, History of the War in Afghanistan (London, 1851), vol. I, p. 273.

38 Text of the Treaty given in Sir Edward Hertslet, ed., Commercial Treaties, 1827-1925 (London, 1936), vol. VIII, p. 719, cited in Gregorian, n. 14, p. 100.

39 Smith, n. 35, p. 591.

to the security and peace of Indian frontiers.⁴⁰ It was also planned to instal Shah Shuja as the ruler of Afghanistan with the help of British army. In November 1838, the British army launched expedition against Amir Dost Mohammad and in August 1839 Shah Shuja entered Kabul following the surrender of Dost Mohammad.

However the people of Afghanistan, despite their internal differences, could not tolerate the alien presence on their land. Consequently a countrywide revolt by the Afghans resulted in the annihilation of a British force of 4,500 men and supporting army of 12,000 and the murder of Shah Shuja.⁴¹

Despite this blowing defeat, the British forces again entered Afghanistan in the autumn of 1842 but were defeated again.⁴² As a consequence of the British failure, Amir Dost Mohammad regained his throne in 1842. Prof. Bilgrami has opined that the first British defeat in the first Anglo-Afghan war "served as a good lesson to the British empire builders not to meddle in the affairs of the far-off lands and taught them to follow a policy of non-entanglement and non-interference".⁴³ However the British never learnt the lesson but repeated the same mistake by launching second and third war against Afghanistan as analysed in the succeeding pages.

40 For details see, Kaye, n. 37, pp. 355-59. Also see, Sir Percy Sykes, A History of Afghanistan (London : Macmillan, 1940), vol. II, pp. 3-6.

41 For details see, Kaye, n. 37, vol. II, pp. 218-46.

42 For details see Munawar Khan, Anglo-Afghan Relations: 1798-1878 (Peshawar, 1963).

43 Bilgrami, n. 22, p. 109.

Second Anglo-Afghan War

Until the death of Amir Dost Mohammad in 1863, the British followed a policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. There followed a period of internal dissensions in Afghanistan after the death of Amir Dost Mohammed. However, between 1869 and 1872, the British and the Afghans forged closer relations. Following the second Anglo-Sikh War of 1847, India and Afghanistan had become close to each other. In 1869, the then Afghan Amir, Sher Ali Khan paid a visit to India which resulted in the signing of Anglo-Afghan agreement under which the British declared their intention not to interfere in Afghan internal affairs and also undertook to support Afghanistan's independence.⁴⁴

However the British Government was alarmed over the growing Russian advances in the Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan. In 1864, Russians gained control of Khiva and Kookand, captured Tashkent in 1865 and annexed Samarkand in 1869 and then got Bukhara. These Russian advances were deemed a serious threat to British power in India. A section of the British policy makers argued in favour of establishing a permanent British mission in Kabul and make clear to all that a pro-British and peaceful Afghanistan was of immense significance to British interests in India and the East.⁴⁵

44 Demetrius C. Boulger, Central Asian Question. Essays on Afghanistan, China and Central Asia (London, 1885), p. 62. Also see, Anupchand Kapur, "Disraeli's Forward Policy in the Northwest Frontier of India, 1874-1877", The Research Bulletin of the Punjab University (Lahore), no. 1, 1951, pp. 4-6.

45 H.C. Rawlinson, England and Russia in the East (London, 1875), p. 14.

Until the beginning of 1874, London favoured a policy of non-intervention in Afghanistan. In February 1874, Benjamin Disraeli's Government came to power in London and Lord Salisbury was appointed as the new Secretary of State for India. The new government followed a "Forward Policy"⁴⁶ which meant that Britain could not preserve its interests in India while pursuing a non-interventionist policy in Afghanistan and demanded the establishment of a permanent British mission in Kabul. However, the then Afghan ruler, Sher Ali Khan was opposed to the appointment of a British mission in Kabul and argued that the religious sentiments of his "people at the time would impose too great a responsibility upon him in protecting a British agent in Afghanistan".⁴⁷ This provided an excuse for the British to invade Afghanistan which resulted in the outbreak of Second Anglo-Afghan War. Afghan forces withdrew back and Amir Sher Ali Khan who had to take refuge in Mazari-Sharief, died on 21 February 1879.⁴⁸

Consequently the British imposed the Treaty of Gandamak signed in May 1879⁴⁹ on Afghanistan. Amir Yakub Khan, son of Amir Sher Ali, became the new ruler of Afghanistan. Under the Treaty of Gandamak, Afghan ruler agreed to the appointment of a

46 For details regarding "Forward Policy", see, W.K. Fraser-Tytler, Afghanistan (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 137-47.

47 Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, Modern Afghanistan (London: Sampson Low, 1938), p. 21.

48 Ibid., p. 22.

49 For text of the Treaty of Gandamak, see Aitchison, no. 24, Vol. XI (Calcutta, 1909), pp. 344-47.

British agent in Kabul and follow the advice of the British in the conduct of Afghan foreign relations. Sir Louis Cavagnari who took over as British envoy in Kabul was murdered in September 1879 which led to the British reprisals. These events led to the abdication of Amir Yakub Khan and in 1880, Amir Abdur Rahman, the nephew of Amir Sher Ali Khan took over as the new ruler of Afghanistan.

(C) The Period of Defensive Isolationism
(1880 - 1919)

When Amir Abdur Rahman took over as the new ruler of Afghanistan in 1880, "Anglo-Afghan relations were burdened with the legacy of two wars, the loss of life and property and the illwill and distrust that resulted".⁵⁰ In his first foreign policy pronouncement, Amir Abdur Rahman informed the then chief British political officer in Afghanistan:

... As long as your Empire and that Russia exist, my countrymen, the tribes of Afghanistan should live quietly in ease and peace; and that these two States should find us true and faithful ... and we hope of your friendship that, sympathizing with and assisting the people of Afghanistan, you will place them under the honourable protection of the two Powers.... 51

In the wake of acute Anglo-Russian rivalry, the Afghan Amir wanted Afghanistan to pursue an independent foreign policy by maintaining friendly relations with British India as well as

50 Ludwig W. Adamec, Afghanistan, 1900-1923 : A Diplomatic History (Berkeley, Calif. : University of California Press, 1967), p. 14.

51 National Archives of India (NAI, New Delhi), Foreign and Political Department, Secret F, Nos. 243-250, June 1880, No. 244A.

Russia. However the British were reluctant to concede the Afghan demand. Lepel Griffin, while assuring the Afghan Amir about the British intention not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, wrote: "... Your Highness can have no political relations with any foreign power except with the British Government..."⁵² This analysis makes it discernible that the British Government accepted the internal independence of Afghanistan while continuing its control over the foreign affairs of Afghanistan. However, Amir Abdur Rahman wanted to pursue an independent policy, both domestically and externally.

Ludwig W. Adamec has divided the foreign policy of Abdur Rahman into three categories:

- (i) Assertion of National Independence;
- (ii) Insistence on Isolationism; and
- (iii) Promotion of a Balance of Power.⁵³

The succeeding pages analyse these aspects.

(1) Assertion of National Independence :

Amir Abdur Rahman always regarded himself as an independent ruler of an independent Afghanistan. In the light of the fact that British exerted control over Afghanistan's foreign relations, the Amir insisted that, after seeking the advice of the British Indian Government, he could take an independent decision on any issue at hand.⁵⁴ The Amir wrote to the then chief British agent in Kabul, Lepel Griffin in 1880, "I desire nothing in lieu of

52 Ibid., Nos. 143-144, August 1905, No. 143.

53 Adamec, n. 50, p. 17.

54 NAI, n. 51, Nos. 34-40, August 1889, No. 34.

services rendered nor do I demand favours in exchange for duties performed. But I have my claims on the desire of the Afghan nation."⁵⁵

In a royal proclamation issued in 1887, he appealed to the Afghan's sense of honour, national dignity and patriotism, drawing their attention to the Anglo-Russian threat: "The country of Afghanistan is a mere spot under the compass of two infidels... it is closely besieged; yet although imprisoned, men are always thinking of their release, you are indifferent to your bonds"⁵⁶. Amir Abdur Rahman united Afghanistan and retained powers and authority to himself. He also equipped the army with modern weapons.

(11) Insistence on Isolationism :

Afghanistan followed a consistent policy of isolationism during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman. Because of the British control over Afghan foreign policy, Afghanistan was isolated from Persia and Russia and left the door for political relations open only to Britain. Even while dealing with the British, the Afghan Amir exercised and asserted his independence to decide the important issues. In place of a British envoy, the Afghan Amir insisted on the appointment of a Muslim as British envoy to Kabul. In October 1881, the British Viceroy suggested the name of Mir Hashim Khan as the British envoy, but the Amir insisted on the appointment of Afzal Khan, which was to be approved by

55 Ibid., Nos. 256-280, July 1880, No. 261, p. 8.

56 For the full text of this Proclamation, see Stephen Wheeler, The Ameer Abdur Rahman (London, 1895), pp. 248-50.

the British.⁵⁷

As a part of the policy of isolationism, the Afghan Amir also refused to allow the British troops and officers to visit the strategic areas in Afghanistan. In 1884, when the Russians had reached Merv, the British tried to influence the Amir for the construction of rail links for the defence of Afghanistan but the Amir while appreciating the British suggestions refused to oblige. He protested the planned extension of the British rail roads to Chaman as "leading to no good".⁵⁸

The Amir was all in favour of the induction of modern technology into Afghanistan but at the same time he feared that it would lead to the penetration of foreign influence.⁵⁹ He was also opposed to the stationing of British troops or advisers in Afghanistan. During 1887-88 when the Amir was faced with Ghilzai rebellion and revolt of Ishaq Khan, he proclaimed that the British were waiting at the border for his call to come to his help. In fact, he did not invite the British army. His purpose was only to warn his enemies and he was not inclined to invite foreign troops on Afghan soil.⁶⁰

The independent thinking of Amir Abdur Rahman was noticed by the British. Lord Dufferin wrote to the Amir in 1886 : "... your mind is constantly occupied by the idea of asserting your independence of all control in internal affairs, that you see

57 NAI, n. 51, Nos. 213-239, August 1882, K.W. I, p. 4.

58 Ibid., Nos. 475-488, June 1892, No. 475.

59 Adamec, n. 50, p. 23.

60 NAI, n. 51, Nos. 76-83, August 1899, No. 81A, pp. 6-7.

interference in every British action."⁶¹

(iii) Promotion of Balance of Power :

During the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman, the geopolitical situation in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan had assumed significant dimensions. Anglo-Russian rivalry was at its zenith. Both great powers were increasing and expanding the sphere of influence in Islamic countries -- Afghanistan, Persia and Ottoman Empire.

Under these circumstances, Amir wanted Afghanistan to pursue a "middle course" policy of forging closer relations with neighbouring Islamic countries without annoying the either great power in the neighbourhood. According to Adamec: "Abdur Rahman's relations with the more or less independent Muslim populations of the East were influenced by Pan-Islamic⁶² considerations".

According to Amir Abdur Rahman, the Russian policy was essentially that "rightly or wrongly, friendly or unfriendly, with peace or war, the Islamic kingdoms should be washed away⁶³ from the face of the Asiatic continent".

Amir Abdur Rahman was perhaps also convinced that the Russians were determined to annex Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan, by hook or crook. There were two possible ways of doing so. In

61 Ibid., Nos. 573-77, August 1892, No. 575, p. 5.

62 Adamec, n. 50, p. 24.

63 Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan, ed.,
The Life of Abdur Rahman (London, 1900), vol. II,
p. 260.

the first place, Russians could directly befriend these countries and thus draw them to their orbit or on the other hand provoke these countries against Britain and eventually reach an understanding with the British in crushing them and thus dividing the booty.⁶⁴

The Afghan Amir also recounted in his memoirs that the Russians were planning to attack India : "Russia expected that an attack on India would be accompanied by a general uprising in that country, followed by a quick Russian victory, since Britain, as a seapower, was no match for Russia on land".⁶⁵ In the wake of such geo-political compulsions, Amir Abdur Rahman proposed the establishment of an Islamic alliance among Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan, which could separate the two great empires neither allowing Russia nor England to take any part of our dominions".⁶⁶ The Amir was convinced about the nefarious designs of both great powers and added that no single power could usurp Afghanistan without invoking the hostility of the other. He felt that although "these neighbours are a cause of much anxiety to Afghanistan, yet, as they are pulling against each other, they are no less an advantage and protection for Afghanistan than a danger [and indeed] a great deal of safety of the Afghan Government depends upon the fact that neither of these two neighbours can bear to allow the other to annex an inch of Afghan territory."⁶⁷

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid., p. 272.

66 Ibid., p. 266.

67 Ibid., p. 171.

Thus, Amir Abdur Rahman kept Afghanistan politically intact by pursuing a policy of strict neutrality by warding off the internal or external interference by either great power. He also maintained the balance of power to the advantage of Afghanistan.

The Durand Line agreement signed between Amir Abdur Rahman and the British India in 1893 is analysed in the succeeding pages because of its recurring references in subsequent years.

Following the death of Amir Abdur Rahman in October 1901, his son, Habibullah succeeded as new Amir of Afghanistan during the same month. Amir Habibullah was faced with a critical foreign political challenge because both Russia and Britain desired a change in the political status quo of Afghanistan.⁶⁸ The Russians wanted to have direct relations with the new Afghan Amir but the British were opposed to such a move and wanted to retain their hold over the conduct of Afghan foreign affairs.

The British Indian Government, while sending the condolence message to the new Amir over the demise of late Amir Abdur Rahman, hinted that a mission would be required to meet the new Amir to confirm the previous Anglo-Afghan agreements.⁶⁹ Britain also informed Russia that there prevailed a status quo even after the death of Amir Abdur Rahman.⁷⁰

68 Adamec, n. 19, p. 9.

69 NAI, n. 51, Nos. 1-129, November 1901, Nos. 9, 22, 36.

70 Ibid., Nos. 8-48, December 1901, No. 37.

However Amir Habibullah in his reply on 31 October 1901, while ignoring the British hint, promised that he would honour the agreements made by his late father with the British Indian Government "so long as the illustrious British Government⁷¹ firmly adhere to them."

However, the Russians wanted a change in the status quo. Even prior to the death of Abdur Rahman, the Russians had expressed such a desire on 1 February 1899, a Russian publication Novoe Vremya contained a hint in this regard:

Russia, whose frontiers run more than 2000 versts with that of Afghanistan, cannot settle the most simple, but unavoidable, frontier question through her relations with the powers of this neighbouring state. For this purpose, we have to communicate with London, and London with Simla, and from Simla attempts begin to enter into negotiations with Kabul, which can easily lead to no result, as the Amir already for some time, and on every possible occasion, shows that he is not a vassal of England... 72

It further suggested the stationing of representatives of both Russia and Britain in Kabul -- a move which could help in removing the British distrust of a Russian invasion of India. In this regard, M. Lesar, Secretary at the Russian Embassy in London, informed the British Government on 6 February 1900:

Russo-Afghan relations have been defined by the Arrangement of 1872 and 1873, which Russia regards as still being in effect and as placing Afghanistan entirely outside her sphere of action. Although Russia's obligations only bind her to refrain from political action, she has, except in the case of transient deviation from the correct standard of diplomatic

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., No. 106-108, May 1899, No. 108.

action, consented in the past, from a feeling of friendly interest toward Great Britain, to forego even non-political relations ... the moment would accordingly appear to have come when a definite step should be taken in the regularization of these relations.... 73

Thus it is evident from these pronouncements that Russia had predetermined to have direct relations with Kabul even prior to the taking over by Habibullah as the new Amir of Afghanistan.

There ensued a series of diplomatic negotiations between Russia and England in which London wanted to know Russian intentions of having direct relations with Kabul with a view to ascertain if a mutually satisfactory solution could be found. On 29 January 1902, the British envoy in St. Petersburg conveyed a verbal declaration of his Government to the Russians that Britain did not wish to contend that "there was no force in the Russian arguments for direct communications on matters of local detail, but that as having charge of Afghan foreign relations, they held that arrangements for the purpose could only be made with their consent".⁷⁴ Ludwig W. Adamec feels that now it was left to Russia to formulate proposals as to the change of the status quo and to give guarantees that any relations would remain of a nonpolitical character.⁷⁵ However on 19 December 1902, the Novoe Vremya, a Soviet publication, carried a statement of the Russian Foreign Office which stated:

73 Ibid., Nos. 145-147, May 1900, Note No. 147, Encl. 1, p. 55.

74 Quoted in Adamec, n. 50, p. 33.

75 Ibid.

In regard to our relations to Afghanistan, it must be remarked that in this matter we made no request to the London Cabinet, but that we merely intimated our decision to enter into direct relations with Afghanistan in consequence of altered circumstances. No further explanations have taken place on this subject. 76

Both Britain and Russia stuck to their respective positions which created an impasse. In the meanwhile, Russians initiated diplomatic offences resulting in a series of incidents. In September 1902, the Afghan officials noticed removal of boundary pillars at Meshed by the Russians. The Russian Government, however, expressed its willingness to reinstate the boundary pillars by a joint Russo-Afghan commission but Amir Habibullah declined the Russian suggestion.⁷⁷ The Afghan Amir, at that juncture, asked for the British advice and the latter offered to send a representative. However, the Russians rejected the idea of dealing with the British representative and went ahead with the task of restoring some of the pillars themselves. In the meantime Meshed area was hit by a famine and some Russians were reportedly selling wheat at cheap rates to the Afghans in the famine hit areas. Thus on the one pretext or the other, the Russians got an opportunity to deal and negotiate with local Afghan officials in Meshed and Herat.

In the wake of these developments the British Indian Government got alarmed and thought that a permanent British representative should be stationed at Herat. However this

76 NAI, n. 51, Nos. 145-147, May 1900, No. 147, Encl. 1, p. 59.

77 Ibid., Nos. 40-183, February 1904, Encl. 1, No. 147.

idea was shelved for the time being because the then Viceroy, Lord Curzon, cautioned the British against such a move since it would frighten the Amir who might resent Russian pressure just as much as he did British.⁷⁸

As a follow up of these developments, the British impressed upon the Afghan Amir the need for the revision of Anglo-Afghan agreements signed earlier on the plea that those agreements were concluded with the late Amir Abdur Rahman as person, subject to renegotiations with every successor.⁷⁹ However, Amir Habibullah asserted that there was no need to renegotiate those agreements. Following prolonged discussions, the Amir finally agreed to accept a British mission in this regard at Kabul.

Consequently, a British mission headed by Louis W. Dane reached Kabul on 12 December 1904 to renegotiate the Anglo-Afghan agreements in force during the reign of late Amir Abdur Rahman. It came to be known as Dane Mission. The negotiations between the British officials and Afghan officials lasted until the end of March 1905. The main issue around which the discussions veered was the nature of Anglo-Afghan agreement of 1880 and its revision. The major British objective was both to get the Agreement of 1880 renewed with favourable modifications and resolve the vexing question of Russo-Afghan relations. However, Amir Habibullah's main objective was to remain independent and not to serve as a "mere pawn on the

78 Ibid., Nos. 83-162, August 1903, No. 155, Notes.

79 Adamec, n. 19, p. 10.

chessboard of Indian military defence".⁸⁰ Consequently, both the sides exchanged drafts of the proposed treaty. The copy of the British draft treaty was given by Dane to the Afghan Amir who objected to the word "Siyasi" as a translation for "Political" for his foreign relations. This shows that the Amir was conscious of not accepting any provision in the proposed treaty which could undermine the Afghan national interests.

The prolonged series of negotiations resulted in the conclusion of what became to be known as Habibullah-Dane Treaty on 21 March 1905.⁸¹ The Amir Habibullah was recognized by the British as the "Independent King of the State of Afghanistan and its Dependencies" and he was to be addressed as "His Majesty".⁸² The treaty reaffirmed the annual subsidy granted in 1893, allowing the Amir to collect £ 400,000 in undrawn subsidy payments and Afghanistan's right to import arms without restrictions.⁸³

The Amir was very cautious about British strategic manoeuvres. He declined to accord trade concessions to the British in Afghanistan as well as introduction of railways in his country.⁸⁴ Under the new treaty though the British failed

80 NAI, Foreign Section F, No. 34-136, January 1905, No. 125, Notes.

81 For text of the Treaty see Aitchison, n. 24, vol. XIII, pp. 282-83.

82 Ibid.

83 Augus Hamilton, Problems of the Middle East (London, 1909), p. 268.

84 Ibid. Also see, Mohammed Ali, Afghanistan : The Mohammedzai Period (Kabul, 1959), p. 148.

to obtain the right to set up a diplomatic mission in Kabul yet they retained control of Afghanistan's foreign relations and considered the treaty as a renewal of the Durand Agreement.⁸⁵

The Russians expressed apprehensions about the Anglo-Afghan agreement lest the British seek to alter the then existing pattern of Indo-Afghan relations by annexing or occupying Afghan territory. In this regard, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, with a view to allay Russian misgivings, assured the Russian Ambassador in London, Count Benckendorff, that Britain would not interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and maintain status quo.⁸⁶

The British on their part sought a similar assurance from the Russian Government for maintaining status quo in their policy towards Afghanistan and regarding the latter "as wholly outside the sphere of their influence".⁸⁷ After having secured such an assurance from St. Petersburg, the British were willing to allow the Russians to have interchange of communications between the Russian and Afghan frontier officials on non-political matters of a local nature.⁸⁵ However the Russians refused to give a formal assurance in this regard.⁸⁹ However Russians expressed satisfaction over it.

85 C. Colin Davies, The Problem of the North-West Frontier (Cambridge, U.K., 1932), p. 167.

86 Lansdowne to Benckendorff, 17 February 1907.
British Documents on the Origin of War,
(London, 1929), vol. IV, pp. 520-21.

87 Ibid.

88 Lansdowne to Hardinge, 8 March 1905, *ibid.*, p. 521.

89 Ibid.

Towards the Anglo-Russian
Rapprochement (1907)

The Habibullah-Dane agreement was concluded at a time when Russia was entangled in hostilities with Japan. Russia was defeated at the hands of Japan. The renewal of Anglo-Japanese treaty of 1902 in 1905 made the Russians hesitant towards the British with regard to Afghanistan. For Russia, the treaty envisaged implications for the Afghan policy of the British Indian Government, and was, therefore, directed against it.⁹⁰ The Russians feared that the British Government had entertained some designs on the Russian possessions of Central Asia and "Special Russian interests" in Persia.⁹¹ In October 1905, the Russian Foreign Minister, Count Lansdorff apprised the British Ambassador of the adverse effect caused in Russia about the Anglo-Japanese treaty.⁹²

The year 1905 had brought changes in domestic political scenario both in Britain and Russia. The new set up of government in Russia with Alexander Isvalski as new Foreign Minister, sought friendly rather than competitive relationship with Britain. During the same year the Liberals came to power in London. The increasing influence of Germany had brought Britain and France close to each other under the immutable law of balance of power.⁹³ In the wake of Russia's close relations with France and French-

90 Ibid., pp. 203-7.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid., pp. 203-4, Enclosure in No. 193.

93 For details about British policy towards France and Germany see, *ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 379-440.

British entente, Russia also made efforts to forge close ties with London. Consequently, in May 1906 both countries started negotiations which lasted until August 1907, with the main purpose of resolving differences and forge cooperation on mutually agreed terms. Consequently on 31 August 1907, Britain and Russia signed an agreement which came to be known as Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. It comprised three agreements on each on Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. The part pertaining to Afghanistan⁹⁴ was on the whole more favourable to Britain.

The Russians conceded that Afghanistan was out of their sphere of influence and agreed to conduct their political relations with Afghanistan through the intermediary of the British Government.⁹⁵ The Russians gained only in terms of local question of a non-political nature which could be settled directly by the Afghan and Russian officials.

The British Government on its part declared its adherence to the provisions of the Anglo-Afghan treaty of 1905 and also declared not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. In other words, British control over the conduct of Afghan foreign policy was conceded in the Convention.

However the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 came as a shock for Amir Habibullah and the people of Afghanistan. According to Vartan Gregorian, perhaps "no single event gave as much impetus to the growth of Afghan nationalism as the Anglo-

94 For the text of the Convention dealing with Afghanistan see C.H. Phillips, The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858-1947 (London, 1962), pp. 485-6.

95 British Documents, n. 86, vol. IV, p. 535.

Russian Convention of 1907".⁹⁶ The fifth article of the Convention provided that it would come into force only after the British Government had obtained the consent of the Amir of Afghanistan and notified the same to the Government of Russia. Though the Convention required the approval of the Afghan Amir but he was not consulted by the British in this regard. The Afghan Government feared that the Convention posed a threat to Afghan independence.⁹⁷ Amir Habibullah was determined to keep Afghanistan completely independent and to that end he wanted to refrain from having any closer relations with either of the two great powers. Thus the Amir of Afghanistan expressed his reluctance to adhere to the Anglo-Russian Convention.

The British Indian Government offered several explanations that the Convention was in no way a slight on Afghan independence but all this failed to appease or allay the misgivings of Afghan Government.⁹⁸

During Amir Habibullah's visit to India in 1908, the then Viceroy Lord Minto tried to convince the Amir : "I cannot but think that your Majesty will regard the conclusion of the Convention with lively satisfaction".⁹⁹ The Afghan Amir while acknowledging the receipt of Minto's message promised that he would send his reply. After keeping the British Government in suspense for about a year, Amir Habibullah in his fifty-four

96 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 211.

97 Percy Sykes, History of Afghanistan (London, 1940), vol. II, p. 47.

98 NAI, Foreign Section F, No. 111, 14 August 1908.

99 Ibid., No. 94-128, October 1908, No. 98.

page reply stated that the Convention destroyed the independence of Afghanistan. It further added that "if they [the British] act in contravention of the principle laid down by them in the past, they will have to show a better principle to their own Government and to ours".¹⁰⁰ However, Afghanistan never signed the Convention.

Seeing that there was no change in Afghan attitude on Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey and his Soviet counterpart, A.P. Isvolsky, agreed in late 1908 that consent of the Afghan Amir was not necessary. Consequently, the British Government declared that "as the Amir had raised no objection to Article 3, and was not prohibiting communication between his frontier officials and those of Russia, we saw no reason why the Convention should not continue to work well, for the Amir was in practice, acting upon it."¹⁰¹

Despite these differences, Anglo-Afghan relations remained normal in the years preceding the outbreak of First World War. The cautious and independent nature of foreign policy pursued by Amir Habibullah deterred both Britain and Russia from exerting any sort of pressure on Afghanistan.

On the home front, Amir further consolidated his position by initiating reforms and projects of modernization. The international developments occurring during that period had considerable impact in Kabul. Turkey's war with Italy and Balkan

100 Ibid., No. 99.

101 Ibid. E. Grey to A. Nicolson, 13 October 1908, Nos. 51-65, December 1908, No. 61.

were "politicized Afghans and taught them the lesson of unity and Islamic solidarity".¹⁰² Nationalists like Mahmud Tarzi played notable role in this regard. Tarzi's Siraj-al-Akhbar, a prominent newspaper, interpreted world affairs from the Pan-Islamic and Afghan perspective.¹⁰³

Afghanistan and First World War

The outbreak of the First World War in the summer of 1914 forced both Britain and Russia not to force the Convention of 1907 on Afghanistan. On 7 August 1914, Lord Hardinge informed Amir Habibullah about the outbreak of war in Europe between Russia, France and Britain on one side and Germany and Austria on the other and the Amir was urged to remain neutral.¹⁰⁴ The Afghan Amir promptly replied pledging his continued adherence to the Anglo-Afghan treaty obligations and declared his determination to maintain neutrality in the war.¹⁰⁵

Following Turkey joining the war, the British became apprehensive about the possibilities of misgivings between Britain and Afghanistan in the wake of Britain's war with the Ottoman Empire. Consequently on 5 November 1915 Lord Hardinge informed Amir Habibullah that "owing to the ill-advised, unprovoked and deliberate action of the Ottoman Government, war has broken out

103 Ibid.

104 Hardinge to Habibullah, 7 August 1914, British Documents, n. 86, vol. 4, pp. 528-29.

105 Habibullah to Hardinge, 18 August 1914, *ibid.*, pp. 540-42.

between Great Britain and Turkey".¹⁰⁶ The British Viceroy further added that Britain's war against Turkey was in no sense a religious war and Britain had the support of Muslim community in India and Persia. He finally urged the Amir : "I feel sure that Your Majesty will not waver from the attitude of neutrality ... you have already guaranteed".¹⁰⁷ The Afghan Amir, Habibullah reiterated his country's continued commitment to the policy of neutrality. The British Government was satisfied with Amir's assurances.

However the British realized that the Afghan mood was sympathetic to the Turkey and not to Germany. An Englishman wrote to his relatives in Bombay from Kabul: "Almost everyone in Kabul was strongly anti-British and pro-Turkish, except the Amir, who speaks seldom in public ... [but] occasionally remarks that the British were very powerful."¹⁰⁸ The Afghan public opinion was reflected by the popular newspaper Siraj-al-Akhbar. Mahmud Khan Tarzi writing in the issue of 16 April 1915 of Siraj-al-Akhbar expressed his surprise that Allies and Axis powers were putting blame for the war on the shoulders of the other. While "the chief and the only cause of this general bloodshed is the commercial rivalry between England and Germany and their respective claims to supremacy based on their achievements in science, expansion of

106 India Office (London), PS Papers 4741 (1914), Memo No. 173.

107 Ibid.

108 NAI, FPS 'War, Nos. 1-202, December 1915, No. 12.

territory and naval strength".¹⁰⁹

While pursuing the policy of strict neutrality, Amir Habibullah did not respond to German overtures. The British King George V sent a personal letter to Amir Habibullah commending the Afghan ruler for maintaining strict neutrality.¹¹⁰ The British could not afford to disbelieve Amir Habibullah's commitment to the policy of strict neutrality during the war period. On 5 November 1915, the Viceroy of India in his report sent to London observed: "The attitude of the Amir continues to be most satisfactory. He is one of the few statesmen in the East, and his conduct has really of all praise".¹¹¹ During 1915 and early 1916, the Germans tried to woo Amir Habibullah to sign a treaty with Germany.¹¹² But the Amir refused to respond to German overtures and reiterated his adherence to the principle of strict neutrality.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the wake of Turkey's defeat in the First World War, the advent of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 and the defeat of Axis Powers in the war had changed the international political scenario. The maintenance of strict neutrality by Afghanistan during the war period and rejection of German overtures by Amir Habibullah had made the British Governments in India and London think how to reward Amir's loyalty. Amir Habibullah wanted his country's

109 Ibid., March 1916, No. 16, p. 7.

110 Ibid., Frontier B, May 1916, Nos. 1-238, No. 280.

111 India Office, n. 106, Memo A-173a.

112 For details see Adamec, n. 50, pp. 28-40.

independence recognised by Britain including Afghanistan's freedom of maintaining political relations with other countries. Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India, wrote to London, asserting that "the services of the Amir have been immense, and when the time comes to reward them, we must be generous".¹¹³ According to Lord Chelmsford, the Afghan Amir could ask for the following concessions from Britain (i) complete political freedom, (ii) territorial aggrandizement, (iii) money, and (iv) representation in England.¹¹⁴ On 2 February 1919, Amir Habibullah wrote to the Indian Viceroy that his country be represented at the Peace Conference because Afghanistan was an independent country and had remained neutral during the war. The Amir further stipulated that if the Viceroy could bring a signed certificate of Afghan independence from the Conference he would be satisfied; otherwise an Afghan representative must be allowed to attend the conference to obtain one...¹¹⁵ The Viceroy's Council was willing to provide some concessions to Afghanistan. However Denys Brag, a member of Viceroy's Council, remarked:

... Our control of Afghanistan's foreign relations have been so long a fundamental principle of our Afghan policy that it requires an effort of mind to conceive of our willingly consenting to any diminution of it. Possibly it may prove essential that it should continue to dominate our policy. But the present is so different from the past, and

113 NAI, Foreign Secret F, Nos. 705-806, October 1920, No. 705, Notes.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

the future seems likely to be so much more different still, that the time has come for us to scrutinize our traditional policy anew. 116

Thus Brag opined that Britain should not alleviate its control over Afghan foreign relations and recommended the conclusion of a definite treaty between Afghanistan and the British India.

However, Viceroy's mood of "being generous" to Amir Habibullah was not shared by London which advised the Viceroy to stave off the Amir telling how that participation at the Peace Conference was open only to belligerents, and that international guarantee would be no good to Afghanistan, even if they could be secured, since they might lead to interference by other nations...¹¹⁷

(D) The Period of Defensive Neutralism
(1919 to the End of Second World War)

Following the assassination of Amir Habibullah on 29 February 1919, Amanullah succeeded the throne of Afghanistan on 21 February 1919. After assuming the power, the first thing Amir Amanullah did was that he wrote a letter on 3 March 1919 to the British Viceroy in India, informing the latter of his father's death, reiterated his Government's policy:

... our independent and free Government of Afghanistan considers itself ready and prepared at every time and season to conclude, with due regards to every consideration of the requirements of friendship and the like, such arrangements and treaties with the mighty Government of England as may be useful and serviceable in the way of commercial gains and advantages to our Government and yours. 118

116 Ibid., No. 706, Notes.

117 Ibid., No. 705, Notes.

118 NAI, Foreign B, Nos. 92-101, September 1919, No. 98.

Again on 13 April 1919, Amir Amanullah announced in a durbar:

... I have declared myself and my country entirely free, autonomous and independent, both internally and externally. My country will hereafter be as independent a state as the other states and powers of the world are. No foreign power will be allowed to have a hair's breadth of right to interfere internally or externally. With the affairs of Afghanistan, and if any ever does I am ready to cut its throat with this sword. 119

The Viceroy of India in his reply to the Afghan Amir remained non-committal and only thanked the latter for informing that he had become the Amir of Afghanistan. Amir Amanullah was proclaimed as King of Afghanistan in March 1919. However the British Government maintained complete silence to Amanullah's demand for recognition of his accession to the throne. The British silence conveyed an impression that Amanullah's rise to power was not favourably viewed by London... 120

Third Anglo-Afghan War

The proclamation of Amir Amanullah as the King of Afghanistan was facilitated through a firman envisaging that he was proclaimed King by the people and that he accepted on condition that

- (i) Afghanistan should be internally and externally free;
- (ii) the people should unite with him to avenge the assassination of Habibullah, and
- (iii) the people should be free and no one be oppressed and government should be by law ... 121

119 Ibid., Foreign Secret F, Nos. 705-806, October 1920, No. 720.

120 Harish Kapur, Soviet Russia and Asia, 1917-27 (Geneva: Victor Chevalier, 1965), p. 216.

121 NAI, Foreign Secret B, Nos. 18-191, September 1919, No. 121.

The dawn of the May month in 1919 marked the crossing of Indo-Afghan boundary by the regular Afghan force. On 1 May 1919, Saleh Mohammad Khan, the Commander-in-Chief, moved to the Indian border, and reached at Dakka on 3 May 1919 along with two companies of infantry "for the ostensible purpose of inspecting the border..."¹²² In a couple of days, Mohammad Nadir Khan arrived in Khost with regular Afghan troops and Abdul Kuddus Khan¹²³ proceeded to Kandhar ...

The firman issued by King Amanullah, which had begun to circulate among the tribesmen living on the Afghan side of the Indo-Afghan border, inter alia stated in part :

I send this order to all subjects of the Eastern circles who are sayyids, Shaikhs, Mullahs, Khans and Motabars and tell you that there is a great unrest in India. Hindus and Muhammedans have almost all remained faithful... but it is a pity that they have been rewarded by cruelty and all kinds of injustices in connection with their religion, their honour and their modesty. 124

The firman further stated that the uprising occurring in India¹²⁵ also affected Afghanistan, therefore Saleh Mohammad was deputed¹²⁶ with full power for the protection of Afghanistan's boundaries. On 4 May 1919, the Afghan troops cut the water supply to Landi Kotal once the British forces retaliated by closing the Khyber

122 Adamec, n. 50, p. 111.

123 NAI, Foreign Secret F, Nos. 1-235, July 1919, No. 1.

124 Ibid., Nos. 1-200B, August 1919, Appendix to Notes.

125 During that period, the Khalifat movement was launched in India which called upon the British Government that Indian Muslims could cooperate with the British during the war of the latter did not launch was against Turkey, the seat of Khilafat.

126 NAI, Foreign Secret F, Nos. 1-200B, August 1919, Appendix to Notes.

Pass, Two days later the Afghanistan forces in the region were increased and they occupied Tor Trappar and Spinatsuka.¹²⁷ The Afghans then moved three regiments from Jalalabad to Mohamand country, and Nadir Khan arrived at Khost with troops and several thousand tribesmen, most of them Ghilzais.¹²⁸

The British retaliated on 7 May 1919 by dispatching a column to Landi Kotal and another to Parachinar. A Cavalry¹²⁹ brigade was sent on 7 May to Shahgai on the Malagori Road. In the beginning the hostilities were confined to the eastern front and the British registered some success. The tribal armies and the forces of Nadir Khan then opened up a new front and the British offensive moves were stopped. The British sent feelers to the Afghan King for ending the hostilities. On 24 May 1919, King Amanullah responded to the British peace overtures and the British Government gladly accepted the end of hostilities in the wake of rapidly deteriorating situation in the North-West Frontier. Series of negotiations between the two countries led to the conclusion of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty on 8 August 1919 at Rawalpindi under which Afghanistan was recognized as a fully sovereign country.¹³⁰ Amanullah paid a price for Afghan independence. "However, he was forced to recognize the Durand Line..."¹³¹

127 India Office Library (London), Memoranda Nos. A 177, A 183.

128 Ibid.

129 Ibid.

130 For text of the Treaty see, Aitchison, n. 24, vol. XIII, pp. 286-88.

131 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 231.

Afghan-Russian Entente

When King Amanullah had assumed the reins of power in Afghanistan, the latter's confrontation with Britain was under way. Consequently, Amanullah's foreign policy followed three distinct paths -- establishment of diplomatic relations with Russia, normalization of relations with Britain and forging solidarity with the Muslim world.

On 7 April 1919, King Amanullah despatched two letters to Moscow. One letter sent in the name of Mahmud Tarzi, then named as Foreign Minister of Afghanistan informed the "Great President of the Russian Republic (Lenin)" of the enthronement of the benevolent Amir Amanullah Khan.¹³² The second letter, a personal note from Amanullah to Lenin stressed the fact that Afghanistan was free and independent, and pointed out that the Afghan "psychology had always contained in it ideas of equality, humanity and liberty".¹³³ Lenin in his reply sent on 27 May 1919, congratulated the Amir and the people of Afghanistan for their heroic defence of liberty and accepting the proposal to establish relations with Russia.¹³⁴

In April 1919, an "Afghan Mission" headed by Maulvi Barakatullah arrived in Moscow. However, Maulvi Barakatullah, disowning any official status or relationship with Afghan Government, declared that he was neither a communist or socialist but an Asian nationalist interested in ousting the

132 For full text of the letter, see Ministerstvo Innostranikh del SSSR, vol. II, p. 175 as cited in Kapur, n. 120, p. 217.

133 Ibid.

134 The Times (London), 13 June 1919.

British from India.¹³⁵ In early June 1919, an Afghan mission led by Mohammad Wali Khan was cordially received in Tashkent and Russia granted permission to Afghanistan to open an Afghan consulate there. While opening the consulate, the Afghan envoy, Mohammad Aslam Khan, said: "We who have risen against the tyrannical British, and made friends with the Russian Soviet, have not done so merely to liberate ourselves or the oppressed Muhammadans of India alone. We strive for the salvation of Muhammadans all over the world".¹³⁶ The Afghan objective of establishing diplomatic relations with Russia was to make its northern borders secure and "to be able to conclude an alliance with the Soviets in case of a renewed outbreak of the Anglo-Afghan war".¹³⁷

The Afghan Mission headed by Mohammad Wali Khan reached Moscow on 10 October 1919 and welcomed by Narimanov, the representative of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and Sultan Galiev, the representative of the Revolutionary Council of the Soviet Republics. In his welcome address Narimanov, while referring to the visit of the mission as "first Ambassador" of Afghanistan further added that the "historic event proves that imperialism which aims at the enslavement and humiliation of large and small nations, has been given a death blow".¹³⁸ Sultan

135 Xenia J. Eudin and Robert C. North, eds., Soviet Russia and the East 1920-1927 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), p. 83.

136 Adamec, n. 19, p. 53.

137 The Times (London), 28 October 1919.

138 Ibid.

Galiev went further and frankly stated that Soviet Russia would render assistance to Afghanistan.¹³⁹ On 14 October 1919, the Afghan envoy was received personally by Lenin who expressed the pleasure of his government at the presence of the Afghan Ambassador in the capital of Soviet Russia.¹⁴⁰ On this occasion the Afghan Ambassador handed over to Lenin, a letter from the Amir of Afghanistan and personally stressed the importance of military assistance to Afghanistan.¹⁴¹ Lenin in his reply to Amir's letter on 27 November 1919 wrote that Afghanistan was "the only independent Muslim state in the world, and the fate sends the Afghan people the great historic task of uniting about itself enslaved Mohammedan peoples and leading them on the road to freedom and independence."¹⁴² The desire of both Kabul and Moscow to normalize relations led to negotiations in Moscow in this regard.¹⁴³

Afghan-Soviet Differences Over Bukhara

The negotiations regarding the normalization of relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union suffered a setback in the autumn of 1920 because of the rising differences between the two countries over the future of Bukhara. Prior to 1917, Bukhara was a protectorate of Russian Empire. In 1868, the Amir of

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid., 15 October 1919.

141 Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs : 1917-1929 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1930), vol. I, p. 286.

142 Kapur, n. 120, p. 221.

143 Ibid.

Bukhara had acknowledged the sovereignty of the Russian Tsar and ceded to him the right to represent Bukhara with other powers.¹⁴⁴

Following the advent of Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Russian leaders had made various declarations recognizing the secession of all states which had declared themselves independent from the Central Government in Moscow. However, the new Bolshevik Government at the same time was awaiting a suitable opportunity to incorporate these states into Soviet Russia. The state of Bukhara was given tremendous revolutionary importance. The Soviet journal Zhizn Natsionalnostei wrote: "Bukhara represents a very important place for the development of revolution in central Asia. Either it will serve a bulwark of reaction led by Britain... or it will become the vanguard for a number of central Asian and Indian revolutionary movements".¹⁴⁵ Afghanistan also showed interest in Bukhara. King Amanullah in his pursuit of pan-Islamic policy, felt that he had a special responsibility to protect the interests of Islamic world. A Russian scholar, I.R. Reysner wrote: "The ruler of Afghanistan appeared in the role of supreme protector of all Moslems, and was equally interested in the result of Greco-Turkish war, in the rising of Egypt and in the fate of Bukhara".¹⁴⁶ Bukhara,

144 For background details, see, Joshua Kunitz, Dawn Over Samarkand. The Rebirth of Central Asia (New York, 1955).

145 Zhizn Natsionalnostei (Moscow), no. 6 (14), 23 February 1919, cited in Kapur, n. 120, p. 223.
I.R.

146 /Reysner, Afghanistan (Moscow, 1946), p. 205.

besides being a Muslim country, was also of strategic importance for Afghanistan. According to Fraser-Tytler, Amanullah had dreams of a Central Asian confederacy under his own leadership of which neighbouring Bukhara would constitute an important part".¹⁴⁷ Most of the trade of Bukhara was conducted through Afghanistan. This flow of trade entitled Kabul to charge transit duties which, according to Reysner, constituted an important part of revenue of Afghanistan in 1920.¹⁴⁸ Thus in the wake of the conflicting nature of interests of Afghanistan and Russia, it was natural that any effort on the part of either of them to undermine the existing status of Bukhara would have been instrumental in straining their mutual relations.

In March 1918, when Kolesov, Chairman of the Turkestan Soviet Government, had moved with his troops to the capital of Bukhara, the Amir of Bukhara was openly assisted by Afghan volunteers, who undoubtedly played an important role in defeating the Soviet troops.¹⁴⁹ It was also reported that Afghan regular troops had crossed the frontier and for a few weeks had effectively occupied Merv and Eastern Bukhara.¹⁵⁰ Thus encouraged by this development, Kabul made efforts to establish even closer relations with the Amir of Bukhara, and to assist him in every possible

147 W.K. Fraser-Tytler, Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 203.

148 Reysner, n. 146, pp. 205-7.

149 Sir George McCartney, "Bolshevism as I saw it in Tashkent in 1918", Journal of Central Asian Society (London), vol. VII, parts 2-3, 1920, p. 44.

150 L'Asie Francaise (Paris), May 1923, p. 500, cited in Kapur, n. 120, p. 224.

way in order to make him strong enough to stop any further attack from Soviet territory. One of the first steps taken in this direction was the exchange of ambassadors by the two countries and making of public declarations of eternal friendship by the King of Afghanistan and Amir of Bukhara.¹⁵¹

While Afghanistan was helping Bukhara to strengthen it, the Russians were making attempts to launch another offensive against Bukhara. In August 1920, the Russian troops moved into Bukhara. The troops of the Amir of Bukhara gave a tough fight which lasted for over a week but finally on 2 September 1920, the Red Army managed to capture the capital of Bukhara. The Amir of Bukhara fled to Afghanistan and a Soviet Government was established in Bukharan capital. On 15 September 1920, the new Government of Bukhara, sent through the Russian envoy in Kabul, a cable to the Afghan Government requesting an exchange of diplomatic representatives between two countries and announcing firm intention to develop close relations between Bukhara and Afghanistan.¹⁵²

However, Afghanistan continued rendering support to the oppositional elements in Bukhara to undermine the interest of pro-Russian elements. The Afghan activities came to the notice of Russians and on 21 September 1920 Moscow instructed its Ambassador in Kabul to hand over to the Afghan Government a strong note containing a number of charges against Afghanistan and demanding an inquiry into the activities of the Afghan

151 Kunitz, n. 144, p. 118.

152 Ministerstvo Innostranikh del SSR, vol. III, p. 183, cited in Kapur, n. 120, p. 224.

representative in Bukhara and the immediate withdrawal of the Afghan troops.¹⁵³ The future of Bukhara was an important issue during the negotiations between Afghanistan and Soviet Russia for concluding a friendship treaty between the two countries.

Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, 1921

On 13 September 1920, Afghanistan and Soviet Russia signed a treaty at Kabul which was ratified by Moscow on 28 February 1921 and by Kabul in August 1921.¹⁵⁴ Article I of the treaty secured Russian recognition for independence of Afghanistan. It also enjoined upon the either side to undertake to respect it and enter into proper political relations with the other.¹⁵⁵ Article II provided that both countries would refrain from entering into any military or political agreement with a third party that might be against the interests of the other". By obtaining the inclusion of such a provision in the treaty, Moscow had been successful in forestalling in the area any military or political alliance which could have adverse effects on the Central Asian borders of Soviet Russia. The Article IX envisaged that Russia agreed to return to Afghanistan all the lands situated in the frontier zone and which had belonged to Afghanistan in the past century.¹⁵⁶ However Russia did not return these territories to Afghanistan. Under Article VI, Afghanistan acquired free transit through Russian

153 Ibid., p. 225.

154 For full text of the treaty see L. Shapiro, Soviet-Treaty Series (Washington, D.C. : The Georgetown University Press, 1950), vol. I, pp. 96-97.

155 Ibid., p. 96.

156 Ibid., p. 97.

territory of all goods whether purchased in Russia or abroad. Under Article VIII, "the actual independence and freedom of Bukhara and Khiva, whatever form of government may be in existence there"¹⁵⁷ was recognized. This provision was a concession to the Afghans and greatly enhanced Amanullah's position as a champion of Islamic solidarity.¹⁵⁸ A supplementary article added to the treaty provided that within a year of coming into force of the treaty, a subsidy would be given by Russia to the extent of one million rubles in gold or silver coin or bullion. It also provided for construction of a telegraph line from Kushk through Herat and Kandhar to Kabul and place technical and other specialists at the disposal of the Afghan Government.¹⁵⁹ According to a news item published in London based The Times, Russia was also to establish a powerful radio station at Kabul and, to supply engineers to improve Afghanistan's communications.¹⁶⁰

Viewed from Afghan perspective the treaty marked a significant move towards Afghanistan's independence in international relations, and was "calculated to strengthen the hands of the Afghan Government in future dealings with Great Britain".¹⁶¹ For Moscow it provided new opportunities for offensive and defensive action against Great Britain.

157 Ibid.

158 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 232.

159 Ibid.

160 The Times (London), 21 September 1921.

161 Kapur, n. 120, p. 229.

The Afghan-Soviet entente aroused British suspicions because only a couple of years back Britain had complete control over Afghan foreign relations and now Kabul had proclaimed its independence which perhaps irritated the British. Besides, the increasing Soviet influence in Afghanistan also alarmed the British. The British Government had become fearful and it voiced its concern in a note of March 1921 to Moscow -- that the major objective of Soviet policy in the region was to overthrow British rule in India.¹⁶² King Amanullah, on his part, was apprehensive of both Great Britain and Russia. He did not trust either. Thus he forged closer cooperation and friendship with Islamic countries. In March 1921, Afghanistan concluded a treaty of friendship with Turkey which affirmed Turkish independence and recognized Afghanistan as "independent in the most real and complete sense of the word".¹⁶³ In June 1921, Afghanistan¹⁶⁴ concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality with Iran. Thus by concluding a treaty with Iran, King Amanullah not only greatly strengthened Afghanistan's diplomatic position in the Middle East but in the entire Islamic community.

Though Afghanistan had concluded a friendship treaty with Moscow, King Amanullah was equally apprehensive of Soviet designs. The British had tended to regard Amanullah as a Soviet "Trojan

162 British Command Papers, No. 1869 (London, 1921), p. 7.

163 For text of the treaty see, Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs 1925 (London, 1927), pp. 385-87.

164 For text of the treaty, see League of Nations, Treaty Series, vol. XXXIII, pp. 295-301.

Horse" but according to M.N. Roy, the Afghans made it clear that they had no intention of allowing any Soviet force to enter their territory and use it as a base of operations against India, nor did they desire to participate in such an operation.¹⁶⁵

However, King Amanullah's primary concern was to steer Afghanistan by pursuing independent foreign policy without compromising the freedom and territorial integrity of Afghanistan in the presence of powerful Soviet Union and British India on its borders. He also followed the traditional policy of seeking a balance of power in the region. He signed a treaty with Britain on 22 November 1921. The treaty provided for the establishment of legations in London and Kabul, and granted tax exemption on materials destined to help modernize the country.¹⁶⁶ A major feature of the treaty was Afghanistan's agreement to keep the Soviet consulates out of eastern Afghanistan.¹⁶⁷

The year 1922 witnessed the recrudescence of complications between Moscow and Kabul over Bukhara where the nationalists had again raised the banner of revolt against Moscow. The Russians, with a view to utilize the influence of Enver Pasha, a former Turkish leader who had escaped to Russia after First World War, sent him to Bukhara to fight the nationalists. On the contrary, Enver Pasha joined hands with the Bukharan nationalists and managed to control important portions of Bukhara by May 1922. King Amanullah, being encouraged by these developments, took the

¹⁶⁵ M.N. Roy, Memoirs (New Delhi, 1964), pp. 492-93.

¹⁶⁶ See Aitchison, n. 24, pp. 288-96.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

step of concentrating his armed forces on the northern borders and at the same time entered into correspondence with Enver Pasha.¹⁶⁸ However, the Soviet Government of Bukhara, having discovered Afghan complicity in the affairs, sent a formal note on 11 July 1922 to the Afghan Foreign Ministry demanding the immediate withdrawal of Afghan aid to "rebels" in Bukhara, the extradition of all rebel leaders in Afghanistan to Soviet Russia and an assurance from the Afghan Government that Enver Pasha and his supporters would not be allowed to enter the Afghan territory.¹⁶⁹

However, the Afghan Government declared that disturbances in Bukhara were "a kind of internal disorder ... [and] Afghanistan remains neutral".¹⁷⁰ Moscow also expressed its displeasure to Kabul over these developments.¹⁷¹ Some Soviet leaders began to consider Amanullah as a puppet of the British and demanded the cancellation of the annual subsidy that Soviet Russia had been giving to Afghanistan under the treaty of 1921.¹⁷² The death of Enver Pasha in August 1922 and consolidation of power by Soviet Government in Bukhara made King Amanullah to forsake his desire of consolidating Afghan power in Central Asia. In the meantime, the developments in the southern frontiers had also been taking dramatic turns. The Afghan King consequently focussed his attention on the Indo-Afghan border.

168 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p. 203.

169 Kapur, n. 120, pp. 234-35.

170 Adamec, n. 19, p. 71.

171 Kapur, n. 120, p. 235.

172 Fischer, n. 141, vol. II, p. 786.

In the North-Western Frontier Province (NWFP), the British followed the "forward policy" with a view to exert their administrative control in the region. King Amanullah saw British move as a slow advance towards Afghanistan. In early 1923 he visited the NWFP areas on the Afghan side and came to the conclusion that British policy was dangerous for Afghanistan as well as for the tribes living in the area.¹⁷³ The British reluctance to abandon the forward policy led to the revolt by the people in the NWFP.¹⁷⁴ Moscow tried to exploit the situation to its own advantage. The Russian Ambassador in Kabul, Raskalnikov, was alleged to have recommended to Soviet authorities in Tashkent on 17 February 1923 that the Afghan-British crisis be aggravated by the distribution of arms and money to the various tribal groups.¹⁷⁵ The British Government in an ultimatum sent to Moscow demanded among other things, the recall of Communist agents from India and the withdrawal of Raskolnikov from Kabul.¹⁷⁶ Though Moscow recalled its envoy from Kabul but the relations between Kabul and London remained estranged. In December 1923, the British Government sent an ultimatum to Kabul demanding the cessation of all Afghan support to the "rebels" in the NWFP area and severance of relations between Kabul and Moscow.¹⁷⁷ The Soviet Russia denounced the British move and at the same time warned Kabul that the expulsion

173 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p

174 For details see, Toynbee, n. 163, p. 563.

175 Great Britain, Command Papers, No. 1869, p. 7.

176 Ibid., p. 13.

177 Kapur, n. 120, p. 237.

of Soviet ambassador from Kabul would in fact mean the end of an "independent Afghan state".¹⁷⁸

King Amanullah, being a shrewd statesman, did not go by either British threats or Soviet advice. For him the national interest was supreme. Seeing the gravity of the situation, he ordered for the arrest of "rebels" who had sought asylum in Afghanistan.¹⁷⁹

With a view to seize new opportunity, Moscow started negotiations for the construction of a telegraph line, a radio station, roads between the two countries and the agreement in July 1924 to commence talks at an early date for the conclusion of a commercial treaty.¹⁸⁰ During 1925 both countries again held negotiations to conclude a commercial agreement. The quantum of trade grew rapidly between the two countries in 1925-26. The frontier dispute over the possession of Dorgid island on the Amu River, which was claimed by Bukhara, annexed by Afghanistan, and again occupied by Soviet troops, was also settled by a diplomatic agreement on 28 February 1926.¹⁸¹

Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression

On 31 August 1926, both Kabul and Moscow signed the treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression.¹⁸² Under the treaty, the two

178 Ibid., p. 238.

179 Toynbee, n. 163, p. 564.

180 Ministerstvo Innostranikh del SSR, vol. VII, p. 395, cited in Kapur, n. 120, p. 239.

181 Kapur, n. 120, p. 239.

182 For full text see Shapiro, n. 154, pp. 322-23.

countries agreed to maintain neutrality in case either of them was involved in a military conflict with a third country.¹⁸³ It was also agreed not to take part in any alliance or agreement of a military or political character with another or several third powers which might be directed against the other contracting party. Both countries also agreed that they would abstain from interfering in the internal affairs of each other.¹⁸⁴ The treaty, on the whole, was more advantageous to the Afghanistan, than to Soviet Union because the Afghanistan / being a small country could neither match the Soviet military might nor could interfere in its internal affairs. This shows that Afghanistan signed the treaty to safeguard its territorial integrity from Russian expansions.

On 28 November 1927, another agreement was signed between the two countries providing for the establishment of an airline between Kabul and Tashkent thus linking the two countries by air.¹⁸⁵ From December 1927 to July 1928, King Amanullah paid state visit to India, various countries in Europe and the Middle East. While in India, King Amanullah spoke of Islamic solidarity and in turn was hailed as the King of Islam.¹⁸⁶ He then visited Egypt, Italy, France and Germany. During his visit to England, he was presented the Collar of the Royal Victorian Order by King George. The visit was marked by Amanullah's visit to

183 Ibid., p. 322.

184 Ibid.

185 For full text see *ibid.*, pp. 356-57.

186 Muslim Outlook (Lahore), 24 July 1928.

the various places in England.¹⁸⁷ During his visit to the Soviet Union, Amanullah delayed three days in Warsaw enroute,¹⁸⁸ judiciously avoiding the May Day Celebrations in order to spare his host's embarrassment and in order to mollify the British.¹⁸⁸ Before his return to Afghanistan, the King also visited Turkey and Iran.

King Amanullah was greatly influenced by the progress made by Europe and he now recognized the enormity of the task of modernizing Afghanistan. His western ways and radical reforms were opposed by the orthodox forces in Afghanistan. His opponents said that the King "had turned against Allah and Islam".¹⁸⁹ He reduced the autonomy of the tribes and the influence of the religious leaders, opposed polygamy and the veil, established schools for girls and extended the military draft to the whole country. Though these were progressive measures, but Amanullah became very unpopular. The resultant impact was the outbreak of a revolt against King Amanullah in January which forced him to flee from Kabul to Kandhar. The leader of the rebellion was an illiterate person called Bacha-i-Saqao who¹⁹⁰ proclaimed himself as the King.

This new development in Afghanistan divided the leadership in Moscow on the question of rendering support to Bacha-i-Saqao.

187 Ibid.

188 Dupree, n. 10, p. 450.

189 Ibid.

190 Nancy P. Newell and Richard S. Newell, The Struggle for Afghanistan (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 37-38.

According to Agabekov, a former officer of OGPU,¹⁹¹ the OGPU was in favour of aiding Bacha in the hope that he would carry out a radical revolution in Afghanistan and that through him, the country would gradually be Sovietized.¹⁹² Consequently, he received the hold of OGPU to come into power.

Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

In view of the fluid situation in Afghanistan after Bacha-i-Saqao had proclaimed himself as the King of Afghanistan, Moscow decided to avail the situation to its own advantage. According to Agabekov "It was decided to form an expeditionary force of red soldiers disguised as Afghans who would secretly cross the frontier and march against Kabul".¹⁹³ The Soviets provided forty airplanes as well as horsemen especially equipped with machineguns.¹⁹⁴ Thus Soviet army entered Afghanistan and after crossing the Amu River captured the town of Mazar-i-Sharif on 30 April 1929. There occurred a fierce battle between the Russian army and the supporters of Bacha-i-Saqao near Khulm and after defeating the latter they marched toward Kabul. In the meanwhile two Basmachi leaders also conducted raids inside Soviet Union from Afghanistan, though unsuccessful. The Soviet media claimed that those attacks were instigated either by Bacha or the British.¹⁹⁵

191 The Russian name for the then secret service, predecessor of the present K.G.B.

192 Georges Agabekov, OGPU : The Russian Secret Terror (New York: Brentano's 1931), p. 164.

193 Ibid., pp. 166-67.

194 India Office Library (London), LPS/10/1203, p. 135/1927.

195 Adamec, n.

While Ghulam Nabi's army was marching toward Kabul, word came that Amanullah had abdicated and fled to India. This created a panic in the Ghulam Nabi's army of whom many had deserted.¹⁹⁶ The Russians promptly withdrew their troops, the last of them leaving in June 1929.¹⁹⁷ Another reason for Soviet Union to abandon the Afghan invasion was that Moscow did not want to alarm the British at a time when it was hoping to restore diplomatic relations with the newly elected Labour Government in London.¹⁹⁸ Thus by launching a well concerted attack on Afghanistan, Moscow had demonstrated that "like its Tsarist predecessor, it had ambitions regarding Afghanistan and was willing to use military force to back them up".¹⁹⁹

Afghan Foreign Policy under Nadir Khan (1929-1933)

Following the defeat of Bacha-i-Saqao in October 1929, Nadir Shah became the King of Afghanistan. The new Afghan King pursued a cautious modernization programme at home and followed the traditional policy of neutrality. While giving the opening speech in the Afghan National Consultative Assembly, Nadir Shah said:

In my opinion the best and more useful policy that one can imagine for Afghanistan is a policy of neutrality. Afghanistan must always entertain good relations with its neighbours as well as all the friendly powers who are not opposed to the

196 Leon B. Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919-1929 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 186.

197 Agabekov, n. 192, p. 168.

198 Fischer, n. 141, vol. II, p. 817.

199 Thomas T. Hammond, Red Flag Over Afghanistan (Boulder, Col: West View Press, 1984), p. 18.

national interests of the country. Afghanistan must give its neighbours assurances of its friendly attitude while safeguarding the rights of reciprocity. Such a line of conduct is the best one for the interest of Afghanistan. 200

Nadir Shah was really faced with an uphill task which was to make Afghan neutrality a reality and to convince among others - Moscow and the Islamic world - that he was not a tool of British imperialism. While refuting the charge that he had received British assistance in overthrowing Bacha, he said: "It was only through the exclusive help of the Almighty God, and thanks to the sacrifices of the people of Afghanistan, unassisted by any foreign power, that I took Kabul." ²⁰¹

He adhered to a policy of non-involvement both in India and in Central Asia seeing in "positive neutralism" the best means of securing internal stability and external independence. In May 1930, Afghanistan confirmed the Anglo-Afghan treaty of 1921 and the Trade Convention of 1923 which had envisaged the tacit understanding that no Soviet trade agencies were to be opened in the eastern provinces of the Afghan Kingdom adjacent to India. At the same time Nadir Shah tried to put a stop to anti-British revolutionary activity in Afghanistan. He discouraged the activities of the Red Shirt Movement and the Afridi and Mohmand tribal struggles on Indo-Afghan border by making clear to them that the "whole frontier policy of the Afghan government would be actuated by a desire for peace on both sides of the frontier and a spirit of true friendship

200 Islah (Kabul), 8 July 1931.

201 Ibid.

towards His Majesty's Government".²⁰²

King Nadir Shah also took steps to further normalize relations with the Soviet Union. While welcoming the enthronement of Nadir Shah the Soviet Foreign Minister, Maxim Litvinov, said that Moscow intended to continue to be a good neighbour to Afghanistan and hoped to develop relations with it on the basis of existing agreements.²⁰³ Afghanistan concluded a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union in 1931 which was in fact the reiteration of the Afghan-Soviet treaty of 1926. The new treaty also gave Afghan commitment against the use of Afghan territory as a base for subversive activities against the Soviet Union. Following the combined blows of Russian Army in Central Asia and the suddenly effective Afghan border patrols, Basmachi activities were on the decline. The relations between Kabul and Moscow were further improved by the signing of a Soviet-Afghan agreement on the definition of aggression.²⁰⁴

This entente in Afghan-Soviet relations was accompanied by an expansion of trade between the two countries. Between 1928 and 1932 Moscow gained a greater share of the Afghan market and in Herat and northern Afghanistan, goods made in Bukhara and Tashkent dominated.²⁰⁵

202 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p. 236.

203 Jane Degras, ed., Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy (Oxford, 1952), vol. II, pp. 430-31.

204 On this Soviet-Afghan Agreement, see Islah, 13 July 1933.

205 Abdul Qadir Khan, "The Outlook in Afghanistan", Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society (London), July 1932, pp.

However, the policy of Nadir Shah with regard to forging close relations with Moscow could in no way be interpreted that he was pro-Soviet. He was scrupulous in his adherence to the Afghanistan's traditional policy of neutrality. He denied a Soviet request for establishing a commercial mission in Afghanistan.²⁰⁶ In place of the departing Soviet advisers, Afghanistan acquired the services of experts from Germany, Italy, Japan and India.²⁰⁷ Nadir Shah wanted "foreign advisers only those who were unlikely to be supported by neighbouring armed forces in case of any disagreement".²⁰⁸

Besides, Nadir Shah also made attempts to have cordial relations with Islamic countries, especially Turkey and Iran. He also took steps in forging Afghan relations with Italy, France, Germany, United States and Japan.²⁰⁹ The activities of the British and the Russians within Afghanistan were curtailed during Nadir Shah's reign.

Post-Nadir Shah Period

The Vharkhi brothers especially Ghulam Nabi and other supporters of Amanullah were opposed to the regime of Nadir Shah. The execution of Ghulam Nabi in November 1932 ushered in a brief spell of political violence in Afghanistan which

206 Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan's Big Gamble, Part I", American Universities Field Staff Reports (AUFSR), vol. 4, no. IV, 1960, p. 14.

207 Ibid.

208 Anthony Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 21.

209 For details see, Gregorian, n. 14, pp. 335-37.

culminated in the assassination of Nadir Shah on 8 November 1933. On the same day, Zahir Shah, the nineteen year old son of Nadir Shah, was proclaimed as the new King of Afghanistan. The young Zahir Shah was assisted by his paternal uncle Shah Mahmud Khan, Shah Wali Khan and Mohammad Hashim Khan, the latter being the Prime Minister and being in full control of Afghanistan's domestic and foreign policies.²¹⁰

King Zahir Shah in a speech in 1934, said that the general foreign policy aims of Afghanistan were "shaped by the desire of the King and his government for world peace so that Afghanistan could continue to combat its socio-economic retardation and catch up with progress."²¹¹ The King laid emphasis on three points: his desire to maintain friendly relations with all countries; his hope to live in peace and friendship with neighbouring countries, and his intention not to raise political difficulties or obstacles for other governments, a policy he anticipated other governments to adopt for Afghanistan.²¹²

Strict adherence to the traditional policy of neutrality remained the main hallmark of Afghanistan foreign policy during the post-Nadir Shah period. Kabul assured the Soviet Government that the Basmachis and other emigre elements from Turkistan would not be allowed to indulge in anti-Soviet activities from its territory. Despite British protests, the Afghan Government allowed the Indian freedom fighters like Raja Mahendra Pratap to

210 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p. 243.

211 For full text of King Zahir Shah's speech, see Kabul Almanach 1934-35 (Kabul, 1937), p. 67.

212 Ibid.

form provisional government in Afghanistan. The Afghan tribes²¹³ also indulged in acts hostile to British India.

Afghanistan became the member of the League of Nations in 1934 and during the same year Soviet Union also joined the League. In May 1936, Kabul and Moscow signed an agreement on an anti-locust campaign and this agreement paved the way for mutual cooperation and a pretext for the convening of annual²¹⁴ meetings. In 1936, Kabul renewed the Soviet-Afghan mutual²¹⁵ pact of 1931, which was extended upto 29 May 1946. This was followed by a commercial agreement in May 1936 which envisaged transit facilities for Afghans through Soviet Union and a financial agreement between the Soviet Commissariat for²¹⁶ external commerce and the Bank-i-Milli. Kabul and Moscow also decided to close their respective consulates in Tashkent and Mazar-i-Sharif with an avowed objective of non-interference²¹⁷ in each other's affairs. This move was welcomed by Great Britain which had campaigned since 1921 against the establishment of Soviet consulate in the strategic regions of Afghanistan.

213 Joseph Castagne, "Soviet Imperialism in Afghanistan", Foreign Affairs (New York), July 1935, p. 703.

214 Percy Sykes, "Afghanistan : The Present Position", Journal of Royal Central Asian Society (London), April 1940, p. 161.

215 For the text of the agreement, see Jane Degras, ed., Calendar of Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy (London, 1948), p. 152.

216 Islah, 23 May 1936.

217 Ibid., 25 April 1938.

Afghanistan During the Second World War

By the time the Second World War broke out in Europe with Japanese involvement in East Asia, Afghanistan had become heavily dependent on the financial and technical assistance of the Axis powers, especially Germany, Italy and Japan. The best way for the Allies "to have ended the dominance of the Axis in this strategic country was for the United States and Great Britain themselves to have extended technical assistance and long term credits to the Afghan Kingdom but neither chose to do so".²¹⁸ However, the only alternative before Afghanistan was to turn to the Soviet Union instead of the Axis powers. But such a move was not keeping in tune with the Afghanistan's traditional policy of neutrality and it would have been highly unwelcome for the British as well. Afghanistan was opposed to both Russian and British influence in the country.

Thus, when the Second World War broke out in the early 1939, it posed a big challenge to Afghanistan's foreign and economic policies. As Vartan Gregorian has aptly observed: "The possibility that Afghanistan independence might be jeopardized or that the country might become a battleground of European diplomacy - even a theater of war - seemed very real."²¹⁹ Consequently, King Zahir Shah after consulting the Afghan Parliament, issued a decree on 6 September 1939, proclaiming the neutrality of Afghanistan.²²⁰ This proclamation was made

218 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 382.

219 Ibid., p. 383.

220 Salnama-ye-Kabul (Kabul, 1940), pp. 46-47.

with a view to keep Afghanistan away from the flames of Second World War and safeguard its independence.

The decree of neutrality restricted the activities of nationals of the belligerent powers; no propaganda activities were to be tolerated and the dissemination of news was restricted to official press releases by the government of the belligerent in the Kabul daily Islah.²²¹

In the wake of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact concluded in 1939, Moscow did not pressurize Kabul to sever its relations with the Axis powers until 1941. And the British being deeply involved in the war in Europe also did not raise any eyebrow in this regard.

During 1939-41 period, Germany made further efforts to woo Afghans, including the supporters of Amanullah, to create troubles among the tribesmen of the NWFP to weaken the position of the British but King Zahir Shah's Government refused to comply with German overtures and reiterated its commitment to the policy of strict neutrality.²²² Fraser-Tytler, who during that period was a British envoy to Kabul, described the situation as one in which "the Afghans figuratively buttoned their coats and turned their backs to the blast, couching behind the frail shelter of their international frontiers, and their proclaimed neutrality ...²²³ hoping that the whirlwind would pass them by..."

221 Adamec, n. 19, p. 243.

222 Gregorian, n. 14, pp. 385-87.

223 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p. 253.

The events had taken decisive turn during the close of 1941 and following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the latter had joined the Allies. There were hundreds of Axis powers' nationals in Afghanistan during that period and the changed war scenario was found to give worries to Kabul. Both Iran and Afghanistan were of strategic significance for the Allies. The presence of Axis subjects in Afghanistan was bound to attract the attention of the Allies. In October 1941, Moscow and London sent similar notes to the Afghan Government demanding the ouster of German and Italian citizens.²²⁴ This demand by the powerful neighbours of Afghanistan had created misapprehensions among the minds of many Afghans. Finally the Zahir Shah's Government after consulting the Loya Jirga, decided to comply with the demand and at the same time reiterated Afghanistan's will and determination to preserve its strict neutrality,²²⁵ independence and territorial integrity.

Accordingly, Kabul was placed under strict surveillance and gasoline rationing was imposed in July 1941. During the same month, the Afghan border guards shot two German agents on their way to the camp of the Fakir of Ipi resulting in the death of one and other was wounded. The then Afghan Prime Minister, Hashim Khan, conveyed his regrets to the Germans over the incident.²²⁶ Following the British and Soviet invasion of Iran during the last week of August 1941, the Germans were trapped in Afghanistan. Both Moscow and London exerted pressure on Kabul

224 The Times (London), 21 October 1941.

225 Kabul Almanach 1941-42, pp. 280-85.

226 Gregorian, n. 14, p. 389.

for the expulsion of Axis nationals from Afghanistan. The German legation in Kabul was not satisfied with the British promise of safe passage for the Axis nationals trapped in Afghanistan. However, on 15 October 1941, Najibullah Khan, the Director-General of the Political Department of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, explained Afghanistan's actions in yielding to Allied pressures as being prompted by his government's desire for peace.²²⁷ The British propaganda and reports in the Indian press continued reporting about the dangers inherent in the continued presence of Axis nationals in Afghanistan.²²⁸

During this period of crisis, the Afghan Government reiterated its policy of peace and neutrality and expressed surprise over the excess propaganda over the presence of Axis nationals in Afghanistan. The Loya Jirga met during 5-6 November 1941 to approve the dismissal of the Germans and at the same time it confirmed Afghanistan's neutrality and as a warning issued a declaration that no further fight or interference would be tolerated.²²⁹

Following the departure of the Axis nationals from Afghanistan there was no more further pressure from Great Britain or Soviet Union in this regard and perhaps both London and Moscow were convinced of Afghanistan's adherence to strict neutrality.

227 Adamec, n. 19, p. 257.

228 Iskan, 18 October 1941.

229 Anis (Kabul), 8 November 1941.

The Durand Agreement

The Durand Line Agreement was signed between Afghanistan and British India in November 1893.²³⁰ Under this agreement, Afghanistan agreed to relinquish its control over all districts to the north of the Upper Oxus in exchange for all districts, not held by Afghanistan to the south of the Oxus river.²³¹ Afghanistan was also allowed to retain Asmar Kunar and Birmal Valley. Afghanistan in return promised not to advance or interfere in Chitral, Bajaur and Swat and relinquished its claim to Chagai, Dawa and Waziristan.²³² The conclusion of the agreement was facilitated by Sir Mortimer Durand on behalf of the British Government and it came to be known after him. The line demarcating the frontier between Afghanistan and British India came to be known as Durand Line.

The task of demarcation of frontier between British India and Afghanistan, as envisaged in the Durand agreement, was carried out for the most part by joint commission of the two countries during 1894-1896, except a small portion remaining undemarcated in the vicinity of Mohmand and the Khyber.²³³ The Durand agreement instead of solving the border problem, envisaged more complications for Afghanistan. The tribes inhabiting the areas which had come under British rule after

230 For full text of the agreement, see Aitchison, n. 24, pp. 255-57.

231 Ibid., p. 218.

232 Ibid., p. 219.

233 Ibid.

the demarcation, were opposed to the very idea of delimitation of the boundary and regarded it as an interference with their independence.²³⁴ When the map demarcating the boundary-line was sent by the British to Abdur Rahman, the then Afghan King, the latter protested against it by pointing out many discrepancies but the British insisted that the frontier drawn on the map was final and Kabul was bound to follow it. The intransigence shown by the British led to large scale uprising on the frontier areas in 1897.²³⁵ Under these circumstances the Durand agreement came under severe criticism. According to Fraser-Tytler, the Durand agreement presented the concrete symbol of compromise, "the manifestation of a policy which, whatever its merit, was not carried out to its logical conclusion".²³⁶ He regarded it illogical from the standpoint of ethnography, strategy and geography as it cut across the people, split the nation into two and even divided the tribes.²³⁷ According to C.C. Davies, the Durand agreement was forced on Afghanistan and the new boundary line was not based on sound topographical data "for during the process of demarcation it was discovered that certain places marked on the Durand map, did not exist on the actual ground. Many ethnic absurdities were perpetrated ... the worst

234 For details see, C.C. Davies, The Problem of the North-West Frontier: 1890-1908 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1932), p. 98. Also see J.W. Spain, The Pathan Borderlands (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963), pp. 177-80.

235 Adamec, n. 19, p. 79.

236 Fraser-Tytler, n. 147, p. 188.

237 Ibid.

blunder of all was the arrangement by which the boundary cut the Mohmand tribal area into two separate parts".²³⁸ King Abdur Rahman refused to accept the agreement and permanent cession of any Afghan territory to the British under this agreement.²³⁹ In 1901, the British created the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) in which included ^{Baluch and} Pakhtoon inhabited areas "grabbed" by the British from Afghanistan after the Durand agreement.

King Abdur Rahman and his successor rulers of Afghanistan refused to accept the Durand agreement. In the wake of the partition of the Indian subcontinent leading to the emergence of India and Pakistan as two sovereign and independent countries, the NWFP became the part of Pakistan. The Afghan Government regards the Durand agreement as invalid and hence insists on the right to self-determination for the people of NWFP while Pakistan has denied Afghan contention. Thus there exists difference of opinion between the two countries on this issue.

The conclusion of the Second World War in 1945 changed the international political scenario which had impact on the post-war Afghanistan as well. The war time allies -- United States and Soviet Union emerged as the main rivals for dominating the world scene. The traditional great power - United Kingdom had lost its power and its withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent in the middle of 1947 changed the political configurations. The traditional Anglo-Russian rivalry was replaced by Soviet-US rivalry which ushered in an era of cold war. Afghanistan's response to super powers rivalry is analysed in the succeeding chapters.

238 Davies, n. 234, pp. 161-62.

239 Mir Munshi, n. 63, p. 158.

Chapter II

BASIC POSTULATES OF AFGHAN FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign policy is the most significant component of a country's political system. It defines "the needs and wants (the interests) of a state and the means by which they are to be pursued".¹ The foreign policy also reflects an image of a future state of affairs and future set of conditions which governments through individual policy makers aspire to bring about by wielding influence abroad and by changing or sustaining the behaviour of other countries.²

It is now a well established fact that the foreign policy of a country is more than simply a series of responses to international stimuli and it also takes into account the forces at work within a society which contribute to the quality and contents of its external behaviour. Thus the foreign policy of a country is closely linked to and dependent on its domestic policy.³

The foreign policy pursued by a country is the manifestation of the sum total of domestic and external factors like national interest, geo-political situation of the region or strategic significance of the country, its response to regional and global

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- 1 Werner Levi, International Politics: Foundations of the System (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), p. 88.
 - 2 Paul Seaburg, Power, Freedom and Diplomacy (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 86.
 - 3 For details see, James N. Rosenau, ed., Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New York: The Free Press, 1967). Also see, Hans J. Morganthau, Politics Among Nations (New York: Alfred J. Knop, 1956), pp. 136-7. Also see, Henry A. Kissinger, "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy", Daedalus (Boston), vol. XCV, no. 2, Spring 1966, pp. 503-29.

problems etc. While analysing the basic postulates of the foreign policy of Afghanistan all these aspects coupled with the ethno-cultural characteristics of Afghanistan which have wielded a tremendous impact in the shaping and evolution of that country's foreign policy, have also to be examined. This analysis of the basic postulates of Afghan foreign policy pertains to the period prior to the advent of Soviet-backed communist coup of April 1978 in Kabul. Under the present circumstances, especially after the Russian invasion, the Kabul regime has not been pursuing an independent foreign policy as it used to be in the past. Afghanistan has become just like other satellite countries of Russia and a dependent of Russian policy. According to Abdul Rahman Pazhwak, a veteran Afghan diplomat, now in the United States, the basic ingredients or essentials of Afghan foreign policy, prior to the communist coup d'etat of April 1978, could be summarized as follows:

- (i) Nonalignment in the political and military affairs;
- (ii) Independent judgement on international issues on the basis of the merits of the issue;
- (iii) Mutual respect on the basis of equality among the nations whether large or small;
- (iv) Respect for the principles of peaceful coexistence;
- (v) Coordination and cooperation between the countries without any conditions;
- (vi) Good and friendly relations with all the countries, especially with the neighbouring countries;
- (vii) Respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, principles of Bandung Conference, and principles of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM);

(viii) Struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, and exploitation in all its manifestation, struggle for the attainment and preservation of political and economic, social and cultural rights of the nations, especially the right to self-determination by the free will of the people of each country; and fundamental human freedom;

(ix) Respect for the international law.⁴

The succeeding pages provide an indepth analytical assessment of the basic postulates of Afghan foreign policy.

(1) Strategic Significance of Afghanistan

The concept of strategic significance embraces an overall view of strategy. Strategy being an integral component of foreign policy has emerged as an amalgamation of military and political policy areas. There is no deny^{ing} the fact that the analysis of national security entails the study fields of strategic studies and foreign policy since it constitutes an integral part of the both. As J. Baylis and others have opined, "If anything, they reflect differences of emphasis rather than differences in subject-matter".⁵

The term "strategy" acquires added significance by providing an option for action aimed at the maximization of own values including interests, based on an indepth assessment of all potential gains and losses as well as the identification of

4 Author's interview with Abdul Rahman Pazhwak, 6 February 1986. Note: Pazhwak is a seasoned Afghan diplomat having represented his country in the United Nations, nonaligned summit conferences and other international agencies. He has also served as Afghan Ambassador to London. He is presently staying at Washington D.C.

5 J. Baylis et. al, Contemporary Strategy : Theories and Policies (Reprint) (London: Croom Helm, 1976), p. 4.

hostile action which is also called "threat perception". This concept of threat perception includes the whole threat spectrum. Thus the concept of "strategic significance" which is a derivative from the term "strategy" is prone to be closely linked to perception.⁶

Raymond Aron is of the view that the concept of strategic significance is viewed historically in the same light as strategy, that is, in terms of military superiority and the ability to wage war.⁷ Broadly speaking, there are three determinants of strategic significance. In the first place, strategic significance is linked to the sumtotal of a country's capabilities. As Lerche and Said have observed: "It is the general strategic role played by a state in world politics that raises issues of capability in the first place."⁸

Besides, the role perception of a country in the global and regional context is another determinant. "A second manifestation of the impact of the state's international strategic position upon capability is derived from its interpretation of the position it occupies in the world."⁹ Thirdly, the perception of other states in the international political system is also important because this perception determines the strategic significance of a country.

6 N.J. Padleford and G.A. Lincoln, The Dynamics of International Politics (Second edn.) (New York: The Macmillan, 1967), p. 52.

7 Raymond Aron, Peace and War (Translated by D.R. Howard) (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), p. 52.

8 C.O. Lerche and A.A. Said, Concepts of International Politics (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1963), p. 67.

9 Ibid., p. 68.

According to Padleford and Lincoln: "The relations of states are partly the interaction of the way the people and leaders of one state view the world situation and respond to it, as contrasted with the ways other people and leaders view the same situation and factors."¹⁰

Thus the strategic significance is perceived as the interaction between a country's capabilities, its geo-perception and the perception on the part of the external environment. Thus, the concept of strategic significance is perception oriented.

The strategic significance of a country is dependent on its own national power and capabilities in comparison to those of other countries, which "indicate a relative power relationship and influences the strategic significance of that country".¹¹

In essence, the relative strategic significance of a country is defined within the scope of a dynamic international system. It is subject to comprehensive security interests and shifting configurations and is based on the particular role perceptions of the countries in terms of national capabilities, as well as the perception of the same factors by other countries in the external environment at a given time.

While applying this thesis of strategic significance to Afghanistan, it is essential to analyse the geographical situation of Afghanistan. Many geographers have called Afghanistan as the

10 Padleford and Lincoln, n. 6, p. 52.

11 R.S. Clive, World Power Assessment : A Calculus of Strategic Drift (Washington, D.C. : Georgetown University, 1975), p. 8.

heart of Asia.¹² It is a mountaineous landlocked country bounded on the north by "the Soviet Republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan; on the west by Iran and on the south-east by Pakistan".¹³ It also shares a short boundary with the Sinkiang province of People's Republic of China.

Its geo-political location has been of tremendous importance for enhancing its strategic significance. The various forces, especially the contemporary great powers during the different intervals of the history had been influenced by Afghanistan's strategic location. This aspect has been dealt in details in the first chapter.

(11) Nationalism and Islam

The people of Afghanistan have a strong sense of nationalism. The Afghan national character is reflected in the literature and culture of that country. Throughout its history, there has always prevailed a cohesive national unity in Afghanistan. It is because of their love for motherland that Afghanistan has never been subject to alien rule. Even in the wake of Russian invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the continued presence of Russian troops, the majority of Afghans have since been fighting for the liberation of their homeland.

12 George B. Cressey, Asia's Lands and Peoples (Third edn.) (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963), p. 77. Also see, Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan" in Donald N. Wilber, ed., The Nations of Asia (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 35-36.

13 M.A. Sohail, "Contemporary Afghanistan", Afghanistan News (London), vol. 4, no. 4, August 1960, p. 11.

Since the emergence of Afghanistan as a national entity under the leadership of Ahamad Shah Durrani¹⁴ in 1747, Afghanistan consolidated its inner strength to become a force to reckon with. The subsequent Afghan rulers followed a genuinely nonaligned and independent foreign policy even in the midst of Anglo-Russian rivalry, during the two world wars, cold war and subsequent period in the post-Second World War. All the rulers of Afghanistan have kept the national interest as uppermost while pursuing the foreign policy.

Islam has played a pivotal role in consolidating the forces of nationalism in Afghanistan. Prior to the advent of Soviet backed communist coup in April 1978, the change of regime in Kabul had never been instrumental in envisaging any alteration in Afghan national outlook. King Abdur Rahman once said: "If I showed any inclination towards the English, my people would call me an infidel for joining hands with infidels and they would proclaim a religious holy war against me."¹⁵ It is evident that even the King could not go against the wishes and aspirations of the Afghan people.

The Afghan spirit of nationalism is reflected in its policy of genuine nonalignment and its espousal for the right to self-determination, faith in the principles of the UN Charter etc. which are analysed in succeeding pages. The famous historic announcement of King Amanullah made on 13 April 1919 reflects

14 He is also known as Ahamad Shah Abdali.

15 Mir Munshi, ed., The Life of Abdur Rahman (London, 1900), vol. II, p. 117.

the towering spirit of Afghan nationalism. He said:

... I have declared myself and my country free, autonomous and independent, both internally and externally. My country will hereafter be as independent a state as the other states and powers of the world are. No foreign power will be allowed to have a hair's breadth of right to interfere internally and externally with the affairs of Afghanistan, and if any ever does I am ready to cut its throat with this sword. 16

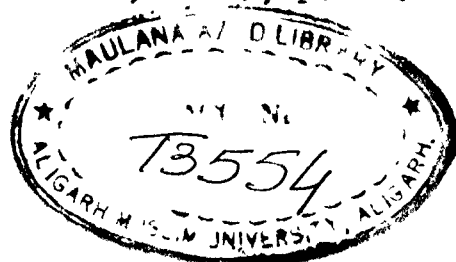
This spirit of nationalism has been the main bulwark of Afghan foreign policy which has remained unchanged in the wake of changing regimes in Kabul. The ruling elites of Afghanistan had never been guided by any alien ideology but for Afghan nationalism. While elaborating this aspect, President Sardar Mohammad Daoud said sometime in 1974: "... We have no connection with any group, and to link us to any group or any movement [other than Islam] is a sin. We serve only our nation."¹⁷ Again in 1976, President Daoud declared that "... Afghanistan has never been anybody's satellite and it is not a satellite but in the orbit of its own nationalism."¹⁸

Thus it emerges, from the above analysis, that sense of nationalism has been a great determinant of Afghan foreign policy.

16 National Archives of India (NAI), Foreign Section
F. Nos 705-806, October 1920, No. 720.

17 Louis Dupree, "A Note on Afghanistan : 1974", American University Field Staff Reports (AUFSR), vol. XVII, no. 8, September 1964, p. 6.

18 Afghanistan Republic Annual (Kabul, 1977), p. 37.



(iii) Opposition to Colonialism
and Neo-Colonialism

Opposition to all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism in all manifestations has been one of the main basis of Afghan foreign policy. Its chequered history as an independent nation having never been subject to be colonized has been instrumental in Afghan opposition to all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism. "Afghanistan was the first country to support the countries of Central Asia against Russian hegemony and expansionism during the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century".¹⁹

Following the conclusion of the Second World War which also proved instrumental in inaugurating the process of decolonization, many a countries in Asia and Africa attained their independence from the colonial rule during late 1940s and 1950s. In December 1960, the UN General Assembly adopted a declaration on Decolonization. While welcoming the UN Declaration, the head of the Afghan delegation, A.R. Pazhwak said that a declaration on the abolition of colonialism should have been one of the first jobs of the United Nations and he regretted that it had been delayed so long.²⁰

Besides the points covered in the UN Declaration, the Afghan delegate made further suggestions:

- (a) ... immediate abolition of the system of domination of any people by any alien people in all its forms and manifestations;

19 Interview with Abdul Rahman Pazhwak, n. 4.

20 Afghanistan News (London), vol. 4, no. 42, February 1961, p. 15.

- (b) independence from domination should apply not only to those peoples and territories which are usually called colonies but to all dependent peoples;
- (c) abolition of domination by giving independence should be completed;
- (d) independence should not mean only political independence but should mean economic and cultural independence, free from any direct or indirect influence or exercise of pressure of any kind on peoples and nations in any form and under any pretence;
- (e) the implementation of the provisions of the declaration on decolonization should be universal and should apply to all peoples and territories. 21

These suggestions reflected Afghan concern for colonialism. While echoing similar sentiments, the then Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Sardar Moharmad Dauod told the first nonaligned summit held at Belgrade in September 1961 that although colonialism was being forced to withdraw, it still sought through "intrigue and deception to retain its self-interests in other forms and shapes".²²

Afghanistan, because of its strong opposition to colonialism and active support for the UN efforts in the process of decolonization was made a member of the Special Committee with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It has played an active role in this regard both in the UN and at other international fora.

While addressing the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Afghan Foreign Minister, ^{Mohammad Mousa} Shafia, said: "We

21 Ibid.

22 The Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-aligned Countries, 5-11 September 1961 (Belgrade, 1961), p. 83.

have always supported the struggle of majority of the peoples of Southern Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe], peoples of Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and other territories still under domination."²³

Commending the work done by the UN Committee on Decolonization, Afghanistan reiterated its support to the Committee and "our sympathy and our backing for all nations and peoples still struggling for the recognition of their rights".²⁴

Since the advent of United Nations till April 1978 when Afghanistan was pushed into the Soviet orbit, the legitimate regimes in Kabul always rendered unqualified support to the people subject to colonial rule. During 1975-77 countries like Angola, Mozambique and Seychelles had attained independence and joined the United Nations. While welcoming these nations, the Afghan delegate, Mangal, a member of the Afghan delegation, told the General Assembly on 7 December 1977 that it was a matter of satisfaction that a number of small territories had been "able to exercise their right to self-determination and some of whom had reached complete internal self-government and on the threshold of independence."²⁵ The Afghan delegate said that it was another achievement of the UN in the field of decolonization.

23 Official Records of General Assembly (hereafter GAOR), Twentysixth session, Plen. Meeting 1961, 11 October 1971, p. 9.

24 Ibid., Twentyseventh session, Plen. Meeting 2060, 10 October 1972, p. 2.

25 Ibid., Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 96, 7 December 1977. p. 1590.

It is evident from the above analysis that Afghanistan has been consistently opposing colonialism and always espoused the cause of decolonization.

(iv) Support for National Liberation Movements

Another cornerstone of Afghan foreign policy has been its full support for the national liberation movements and struggles for the attainment of independence from the colonial domination. Afghanistan was the first country to recognize the freedom fighters of Algeria, when the latter was struggling for independence.²⁶ Even at the first NAM summit held at Belgrade in September 1961, Sardar Mohammad Daoud, Prime Minister of Afghanistan, announced his country's support for the Algerian struggle. While addressing the General Assembly on the Algerian question, Afghanistan's chief delegate to the UN, A.R. Pazhwak said: "Afghanistan is convinced that its support for the cause of the Algerian people ... is right and just."²⁷ Afghanistan also welcomed the admission of Algeria into the UN: "It is a great privilege ... to welcome the admission of Algeria to the United Nations, on behalf of the Afghan Government and the people of Afghanistan".²⁸

Besides, Afghanistan has also rendered support for liberation movements in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola and expressed solidarity with the people of Palestine in their

²⁶ Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, n. 4.

²⁷ Afghanistan News, vol. 5, no. 54, February 1962, p. 16.

²⁸ Ibid., vol. 5, no. 64, December 1962, p. 19.

struggle against Zionism. These aspects are analysed in succeeding pages.

(v) Opposition to Racist and Apartheid Regime of South Africa

Strong opposition to the racial and apartheid policies pursued by the white minority regime of South Africa has been another bulwark of Afghan foreign policy. Be it the General Assembly or other international forum, Afghanistan always espoused the cause of the people of South Africa and severely condemned the apartheid regime.

Zalmai Mahmud-Ghazi, a member of the Afghan delegation to the UN, told the Ad hoc Political Committee of the General Assembly in April 1961 that Afghanistan was shocked to note the blatant violation of basic principles of freedom and equal opportunity by the racist regime of South Africa.²⁹ While reiterating the Afghan opposition to racialism and apartheid, Afghan Foreign Minister, M.M. Shafiq, told the twentysixth session of the General Assembly: "We have never failed to condemn apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination as flagrant violation of principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations."³⁰

Afghanistan keenly watched the developments with South Africa and the steps taken by international community in that direction. While addressing the thirtyfirst session of the General Assembly, the Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister, Wahed Abdullah, said:

²⁹ Ibid., vol. 4, no. 45, May 1961, p. 21.

³⁰ GAOR, Twentysixth session, Plen. Meeting 1961, 11 October 1971, p. 10.

As a staunch supporter of the principles of freedom, nationalism, and respect for the rights of nations, Afghanistan hopes that these efforts will eventually enable the people of Southern Africa, who have suffered under the oppression of the privileged classes to attain their ideals and aspirations. 31

In 1976, when the racist regime of South Africa resorted to massacres and massive repression against the innocent people, Afghanistan not only condemned them but expressed its wholehearted support to the "legitimate struggle of the people of South Africa for self-determination and the eradication of the inhuman policy of the apartheid".³²

The United Nations had taken certain measures against racist regime of South Africa but these measures could not dissuade the latter to abandon the policy of apartheid. While addressing the thirtysecond session of the General Assembly,

a member of the Afghan delegation, noted that though certain measures had been initiated by the world community to reverse this trend but regretted that "the nefarious doctrine of apartheid and social discrimination still prevails".³³

(vi) Support for Namibia

Afghanistan has consistently supported the people of South-West Africa, known as Namibia, for their struggle to attain independence from the racial regime of South Africa. The Union of South Africa was given the mandate over Namibia by the League

31 Ibid., Thirtyfirst session, Plen. Meeting 10, 29 September 1976, p. 161.

32 Ibid., Plen. Meeting 52, 2 November 1976, p. 876.

33 Ibid., Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 96, 7 December 1977, p. 1591.

of Nations with specific responsibilities to ensure the welfare of the local population.

However, after the Second World War, South Africa annexed the territory and the people of Namibia have not only been denied independence but subject to repression. In May 1961, Dr. A.H. Tabibi, Councillor to the Afghan Permanent Mission to the UN, said that the situation in South-West Africa was tragic because South Africa had violated all the political, legal and moral obligations embodied in the UN Charter.³⁵ Keeping in view the fact that efforts of the United Nations had borne no fruits until 1962, Afghanistan regretted that the endeavours of the UN to solve the problem of South-West Africa by peaceful means had failed because of the unrelenting obstinacy of the South African racist regime.³⁶

With the passage of time, there was no change in South African policy of repression towards the people of Namibia. Afghanistan's reaction to it became more vehement and strong. While addressing the thirtysecond session of the General Assembly,

a member of the Afghan delegation, said: "We believe that apartheid in Namibia means not only racial discrimination, segregation in homelands, and slave labour but also the fragmentation and brutalization of the Namibians ..."³⁷

34 UN, The United Nations At Forty (New York, 1985), p. 71.

35 Afghanistan News, vol. 4, no. 45, May 1961, p. 21.

36 F.A. Zikria, Afghan representative's statement before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly. Ibid., vol. 6, no. 65, January 1963, p. 17.

37 GAOR, Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 96, 7 December 1977, p. 1591.

Thus, Afghan support for the people of Namibia was keeping in consonance with its foreign policy which was consistently pursued.

(vii) Support for Palestine

Afghanistan has been the ardent supporter for the people of Palestine in their struggle against Zionism and has reiterated its support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinians to return to their homeland. The problem of Palestine arose in 1947 when the UN General Assembly recommended the partition of Palestine into two territories -- one for the Palestinians and the other for the Jews. However, the Zionists unilaterally declared the establishment of a Zionist State of Israel in May 1948 and usurped other areas by force.³⁸

Since then, the Palestinians are struggling to regain their motherland. The Arab-Israel wars of 1948, 1967 and 1973 and continued hostilities have further added to the miseries of the Palestinians. The formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its recognition by the international community in 1974, as the sole representative of the Palestinians have been welcomed by Afghanistan. While voicing Afghanistan's concern, Malikyar, the Afghan representative told the thirtyfirst session of the General Assembly:

The position of Afghanistan on Palestine is clear. The question of Palestine, the essence of which is the restoration and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people forms the core of the solution... It is obvious that this purpose

38 For a detailed background see Pamela Ann Smith, Palestine and the Palestinians 1876-1933 (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

cannot be achieved unless Israel withdraws from all the occupied territories. 39

Afghanistan continuously insisted that the total and complete withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including the right of self-determination and the establishment of a Palestinian State would only solve the problem. 40

Thus, Afghan support for the Palestine people has been keeping in tune with its objectives of foreign policy.

(viii) Support for the Right to Self-Determination

Afghanistan has attached tremendous significance to the right for self-determination whether in the UN General Assembly or other international forum, Afghanistan has consistently and ardently espoused the cause of exercising right to self-determination by the people still under domination.

The UN Charter recognizes the right to self-determination. Article 1(2) envisages that one of the purposes of the United Nations is: "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace". 41 It was Afghanistan which suggested for the first time that the right to self-determination which prior to

39 GAQR, Thirtyfirst session, Plen. Meeting 32, 19 November 1976, p. 1122.

40 Statement of Abdullah, Afghan representative. Ibid., Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 79, 4 October 1977, p. 349.

41 UN, Everyone's United Nations (Ninth edn.) (New York, 1979), p. 382.

that was incorporated as a political principle in the UN Charter and Universal Declaration on Human Rights to be treated as a fundamental right.⁴² Afghanistan's vigorous espousal in this regard resulted in the incorporation of right to self-determination in the first Article both in the UN Charter and both the UN Covenants on Human Rights.⁴³

Afghanistan's vigorous espousal for the right to self-determination forms the cornerstone of its foreign policy and opposition to colonialism, racialism, apartheid and support for the national liberation movements, all these stem from Afghan support for right to self-determination. This point was made clear by A.R. Pazhwak in his address to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly when he said:

Afghanistan reaffirmed its belief in the principles of coexistence and asked for a clearer understanding of these principles through their codification and declaration to the world as principles which would include mutual respect for all; support of the right of all nations to choose their own political, economic and social system; respect for the undeniable and inherent right of all peoples to self-determination... 44

Elaborating further the Afghan stand on right to self-determination, Pazhwak told the twentieth session of the General Assembly:

In all cases, we have believed and expressed our belief that peace and stability depend solely on the respect for and observance of self-determination. The sincerity of those who uphold this right can be fully tested only by observing whether they adhere to it in all cases and in all places. 45

42 Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, n. 4.

43 Ibid. Also see, GAOR, Fifth session, December 1950, UN Doc. A/C.3/L.88.

44 GAOR, Nineteenth session, Plen. Meeting 1323, 15 December 1964, p. 8.

45 Ibid., Twentieth session, Plen. Meeting 1362, 21 September 1965, p. 7.

Afghanistan has continuously championed the cause of dependent people throughout the world and pleaded for the exercise of right to self-determination. The Afghan delegate Hassrat, a member of Afghan delegation, while addressing the twentyseventh session of the General Assembly, said on 20 October 1972:

... In view of the prevailing situation, our delegation most strongly demands the implementation of the right of the dependent territories to self-determination and independence on the basis of the undeniable conviction held by the majority of the members of the international community. 46

This is evident from the above analysis that Afghanistan has been vocal enough in championing the cause of dependent people and territories with a view to enable them to exercise the right to self-determination.

(ix) Support for Universal Human Rights

Afghanistan has played a key role in the framing and then adoption by the General Assembly of Universal Declaration on Human Rights. It has not only actively participated but made positive contribution in improving the working of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In April 1961, Abdul Rahman Pazhwak, the then chief Afghan delegate to the United Nations, suggested that the Commission should transmit without delay a general recommendation⁴⁷ to all the governments on the preparation of periodic reports. The Afghan suggestion was adopted unanimously.

46 Ibid., Twentyseventh session, Plen. Meeting 2069, 20 October 1972, p. 14.

47 Afghanistan News, vol. 4, no. 45, May 1961, p. 21.

In April 1963, A.R. Pazhwak was unanimously elected as the chairman of the Human Rights Commission. Speaking on the occasion, Pazhwak said that his unanimous election was a honour for his country and his person and his impartiality had been the consequence of Afghanistan's basic policy in the interest of international cooperation and peace among mankind.⁴⁸

Afghanistan was opposed to the encroachment upon individual's basic rights. While speaking on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of Declaration of Human Rights, A.R. Pazhwak emphasized that though the collective rights of peoples to dignity and equality within the United Nations were an accepted fact, the world would better prosper if forces of resistance against the rights of individuals and peoples did not persist in most parts of the world.⁴⁹

(x) Support for New International Economic Order (NIEO)

The call for New International Economic Order (NIEO) was given by the Algerian nonaligned summit in 1973, which was later adopted as a Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order by the General Assembly at its sixth special session held in April 1974.⁵⁰

The Declaration adopted by the General Assembly, proclaimed the determination of the Member States to work urgently for the establishment of a new international economic order based on

48 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 69, May 1963, p. 10.

49 Ibid., vol. 7, no. 73, February 1969, p. 16.

50 Everyone's UN, n. 41, p. 122.

equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and cooperation among all countries which would correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and developing countries.

It was but natural for a less developed and landlocked country like Afghanistan to support the speedy implementation of new international economic order. A close analysis of the pronouncements made by Afghan statesmen, especially by A.R. Pazhwak, reveals that Afghanistan had been pressing for NIEO even prior to its being adopted by the General Assembly. While making a statement before the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 12 July 1960, Pazhwak said: "As a representative of a less developed country, I should think that it is in favour of both of underdeveloped countries and also the lessening of tension if more emphasis is put on the necessity of international cooperation."⁵¹ He also called for the liberalization of trade and stabilization of commodity prices. Being a landlocked country, Afghanistan has no direct access to the sea. Hence it is faced with numerous problems like transit facilities from the neighbouring countries. The resultant impact is increased burden on Afghanistan in foreign exchange.

A conference on International Economic Cooperation was held in Paris in 1977 to discuss the developments made in implementing the NIEO.⁵² However the least developed countries including Afghanistan were not represented in this conference.

51 Afghanistan News, vol. 4, no. 34, September 1960, p. 15.

52 For details see UN Doc. A/31/478/Add. 1.

Afghanistan's concern about this was expressed by the Deputy
 Wahed
 Foreign Minister, Abdullah, in his statement before the Thirty-
 second session of the General Assembly:

How can a meeting which ignored the existence of such an important section of the international community and its problems, safeguard the interests of the least developed landlocked countries and consequently reach decisions benefiting the whole mankind including those countries... I propose that in future that factor should be taken into consideration. 53

Apart from voicing its own problems, Afghanistan took up the case of other least developed and landlocked countries with a view to get their problems solved.

(xi) Support for Disarmament

Unqualified support for general and complete disarmament forms the bedrock of Afghan foreign policy. Be it in General Assembly or Disarmament Commission or in nonaligned conferences, Afghanistan has called for the halt to arms race, liquidation or destruction of nuclear weapons and vigorously espoused for the attainment of complete disarmament in the larger interest of mankind. Reiterating Afghan stand on disarmament, the permanent Afghan delegate to the UN, A.R. Pazhwak, told the First Committee of the General Assembly in December 1960:

We agree that no time should be wasted and situation should not be allowed to develop in a manner which would make the efforts for disarmament more difficult. We share the grave concern that any delay in the solution of the disarmament problem will result in more serious situation and grave consequences. 54

53 GAOR, Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 19,
 4 October 1977, p. 349.

54 Afghanistan News, vol. 4, no. 41, January 1961, p. 20.

Along with other non-nuclear weapon countries, Afghanistan has also expressed its opposition to nuclear tests from time to time. In December 1961, A.R. Pazhwak told the General Assembly that his country was against nuclear weapons of any size by any country.⁵⁵ He further added that Afghanistan felt that it was imperative that the concern of the General Assembly should be expressed regarding the tension which had been caused by the nuclear powers to resume nuclear testing.⁵⁶

The Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) was signed in 1963. Afghanistan while welcoming the PTBT urged the General Assembly to work out a comprehensive test ban treaty. In October 1963, A.R. Pazhwak told the General Assembly that though the PTBT had no practical effect on Afghanistan but his country adhered to it in the larger interest of world peace.⁵⁷ He further added that the climate of the agreement between the big powers could be extended through a comprehensive treaty covering underground tests. Afghanistan was convinced that durable peace could only be attained if general and complete disarmament under effective control was achieved.⁵⁸

Policy of Nonalignment

Commitment and strict adherence to the principles of nonalignment forms the cornerstone of Afghan foreign policy.

55 Ibid., vol. 5, no. 53, January 1962, p. 8.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 75, November 1963, p. 15.

58 GAOR, Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 19, 4 October 1977, p. 349.

Afghanistan is one of the oldest nonaligned countries. The present analysis of Afghan commitment to the policy of nonalignment pertains to the period prior to the advent of Soviet-backed communist coup in April 1978 in Kabul. According to Abdul Rahman Paxhwak, Afghanistan has been the first nonaligned country in Asia and one of the fore-runners of the NAM.⁵⁹

Afghanistan throughout its history has essentially remained a free country and in case it was invaded or some of its territory was under alien occupation, the people of Afghanistan fought tooth and nail against the invaders and liberated their territory. The three Anglo-Afghan wars are testimony to it. This Afghan tradition of resistance to alien occupation continued until the period of Abdur Rahman when the Afghan foreign policy had come under the British influence. But in its internal affairs⁶⁰ Afghanistan was totally free.

At a time when the Anglo-Russian rivalry was at its zenith, Afghanistan pursued a policy of genuine nonalignment. This aspect is analysed in detail in the first chapter. Afghanistan maintained strict neutrality during the First World War, between First World War and till the outbreak of the Second World War and even during the World War II period.

"Following the advent of the NAM, it was natural that those countries which wanted to bring this movement into life, found in Afghanistan a country which had traditionally followed the policy of strict neutrality in the past and which now formed

59 Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, n. 4.

60 Ibid.

the basis of nonalignment".⁶¹ In early 1950s when the idea for launching NAM was mooted by Yugoslavia, Egypt, India, Indonesia and others, the Afghan leaders were also consulted in this regard. President Nasser of Egypt paid a visit to Afghanistan after the Bandung Conference to elicit Afghan support for the NAM.⁶²

Afghanistan had never been subject to alien rule and the principles of nonalignment as understood in the current connotation of the term have formed the very basis of Afghan foreign policy even before the concept of NAM gained currency. While addressing the first NAM summit held at Belgrade, the Afghan Premier, Sardar Mohammad Daoud said that "nonalignment has been the traditional basis of Afghan foreign policy which it has followed under the name of impartial judgement."⁶³

Afghanistan not only pursued the policy of nonalignment vigorously but also played a pivotal role in the NAM summits. The term "nonalignment" gained currency only in late 1950s and prior to that Afghan foreign policy was called "neutral policy". The Afghan leaders criticized those who regarded neutralism as an escapist policy and reiterated that "our neutrality is not a passive but an active one and we reserve our freedom of judgement in all questions of world importance".⁶⁴

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 Speech of Afghan Prime Minister Sardar Mohammad Daoud at the Belgrade Summit, The Conference of Heads of State or Governments of Non-Aligned Countries, n. 22, p. 80.

64 Statement by an Afghan Foreign Minister cited in H.C. Taussing, "Afghan Neutralism", Eastern World, vol. 15, no. 12, December 1961, p. 11.

While further elaborating the Afghan concept of "neutralism", the then Prime Minister of Afghanistan said on 24 August 1959 that the Afghan neutralism should "never be interpreted as lack of interest. For even though we take a neutral stand in the differences of views and struggles ... we cannot remain aloof and disinterested in the problems which affect humanity at large."⁶⁵

The change of leadership or government in Kabul had never affected Afghanistan's steadfast commitment and adherence to the principles of NAM. A.R. Pazhwak, the Permanent Afghan Representative to the United Nations, while addressing the eighteenth session of the UN General Assembly in October 1963 said that Afghanistan's traditional policy of nonalignment had remained unchanged.⁶⁶ He further pointed out that the policy of non-alignment had enabled Afghanistan in the past and still enabled it to maintain impartiality towards all peoples and to remain absolutely independent of all international situations.⁶⁷

Similar stance was reiterated by Afghan representative to the General Assembly, ^{M.M.} Shafiq, in his address on 11 October 1971 when he said:

Afghanistan is the oldest nonaligned member of the UN. I should like to state that we shall continue our positive and active policy of nonalignment within and without the United Nations, based on our free judgement of all international situations on the basis of their

65 Afghanistan News, vol. 3, no. 26, October 1959, p. 7.

66 Ibid., vol. 6, no. 75, November 1963, p. 15.

67 Ibid.

merits. We believe that the policy of non-alignment and the principles adopted by the different nonaligned conferences of the non-aligned countries of the world ... have made a significant contribution to the noble cause of world peace and international security. 68

The Afghan leaders had espoused the cause of nonalignment vigorously by active participation in the nonaligned summit conferences, in the General Assembly and other international forums. Until the advent of communist regime in Kabul in April 1978 and subsequent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 which virtually eroded the nonaligned status of Afghanistan, it had a chequered history of steadfast commitment to the norms of nonalignment. This is evident from the statements of Sardar Mohammad Dauod, then President of Afghanistan, made on 14 August 1976 at New Delhi on his way to Sri Lanka to attend the fifth NAM Summit at Colombo. He said that "the Republic of Afghanistan has explicitly, clearly and consistently respected the principles of nonalignment and will always follow these principles. We are 69 against any motive which will weaken these principles."

Since Afghanistan had been a staunch supporter and adherent to the principles of the NAM, it expected the other nonaligned countries to be steadfast in their commitment to the norms and ideals of the NAM. As President Dauod said: "The non-alignment movement will have better meaning when its principles are adhered to and put into practice and Afghanistan has always

68 GAOR, Twentysixth session, Plen. Meeting 1961, 11 October 1971, p. 7.

69 Kabul Times, 15 August 1976.

firmly adhered to the principles of this movement."⁷⁰

Thus it is revealed from the aforementioned analysis that steadfast commitment and adherence to the principles of NAM constituted the cornerstone of Afghan foreign policy prior to April 1978. The erosion of the nonaligned status of Afghanistan after April 1978 will be analysed in Chapter V.

Strengthening the United Nations

According to A.R. Pazhwak, member countries of the United Nations can strengthen the world body in two ways - economically and morally.⁷¹ Afghanistan, like majority of other economically poor countries, has used only the moral support as a potent instrument in strengthening the United Nations.

Afghanistan has an unflinching faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It was associated with negotiations at San Francisco which led to the establishment of the UN. Afghanistan was inducted as a full-fledged member of the UN on 19 November 1946. While applying for membership, the then Afghan Premier, Shah Mahmud in a telegram transmitted on 2 July 1946 stated that "Afghanistan has long showed itself to be a peace loving state devoted to the ideals of international cooperation for which the United Nations stand."⁷²

70 Ibid.

71 Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, n. 4.

72 Yearbook of the United Nations: 1946-47 (New York, 1947), p. 416.

In its debut participation, the Afghan delegate, Abdul Hussain Aziz, while addressing the General Assembly on 19 November 1946, openly declared his country's full support for the ideals of the UN and hoped that the untiring efforts of the United Nations would ultimately succeed in achieving the everlasting peace.⁷³

Since its admission into the UN, Afghanistan has played a positive and constructive role in the various organs of the UN and its specialized agencies. On most of the issues, Afghanistan has cast its positive vote based on free and impartial judgements. Abdul Rahman Pazhwak recalled that once when the deadlock over amending the Article 19 of the UN Charter arose, which otherwise could have paralyzed the functioning of the General Assembly, he as a permanent Afghan envoy to the General Assembly played a pivotal role in evolving a consensus in that regard and the impasse was overcome.⁷⁴

Afghanistan had played a significant role in various committees and commissions of the United Nations. Abdul Rahman Pazhwak had for long time been Afghanistan's permanent representative to the UN. In an interview with the Bakhtar news agency of Afghanistan in June 1961, he said that Afghanistan had been taking active part in the task of facilitating international matters relating to the United Nations.⁷⁵ He further added that

73 GAOR, First session, Plen. Meeting 48, Part II, 19 November 1946, p. 66.

74 Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, n. 4.

75 Afghanistan News, vol. 4, no. 47, July 1961, p. 16.

Afghanistan in its capacity as the Chairman of the Committee to review the UN Charter had played a constructive role which was highly appreciated by other countries.⁷⁶

Afghanistan had been traditionally a nonaligned country and it was aligned only with the United Nations. This was reiterated by Sardar Mohammad Naim, then Foreign Minister and Deputy Premier, in his address to the fifteenth session of the General Assembly on 18 September 1960:

I speak strictly for a small peace loving country with the most impartial and independent position in international affairs having the deepest conviction in the UN, the only alliance to which we belong under its Charter, where our record is well known and our friendship with all cannot be questioned. ⁷⁷

Besides its own active participation, Afghanistan felt happy over the increasing membership of the United Nations. She was of the view that increasing popularity of the UN facilitated by the induction of new member countries was indicative of universal application of the principles of the UN Charter. In this regard Sardar Mohammad Naim, the then Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan in his address to the General Assembly on 18 September 1960 said that with the increased number of members the UN was approaching the ideal of universality.⁷⁸

While reiterating the similar hope, Sardar Mohammad Naim in his address to the seventeenth session of the General Assembly

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid., vol. 4, no. 39, November 1960, p. 18.

78 Ibid., p. 17.

further noted that the increasing membership of the UN was because of the great achievements of the world body in securing the rights of the peoples and nations to independence and their equal rights to contribute to the work of building up a secure and peaceful world.⁷⁹

A strong and stable United Nations, in Afghanistan's view, was essential for maintaining peace and security in the world. As Sardar Mohammad Naim told the seventeenth session of the General Assembly: "It is a strong United Nations that comes first as an international instrument in which we can place our hope for the solution of all major and minor problems confronting the world."⁸⁰

Being an ardent supporter of a strong UN, Afghanistan rendered its fullest cooperation in strengthening the world body. It had been of the view that the UN could become strong only if its member countries extended full cooperation. This point was stressed by the Afghan delegate to the General Assembly

in his address to the thirtyfirst session of the General Assembly:

The success or failure of the UN in carrying out its responsibilities under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the realization of the right to self-determination and independence depends upon the amount of support which Member States extend to this organization; and to the extent of their compliance with the principles of the Charter and the resolutions of this organization. 81

79 Ibid., vol. 5, no. 63, November 1962, p. 10.

80 Ibid., p. 11.

81 GAOR, Thirtyfirst session, Plen. Meeting 85, 1 December 1976, p. 1307.

In Afghanistan's view, if all Member countries of the UN rendered full cooperation to the world body it could certainly be strengthened. As Abdullah, the Deputy Foreign Minister, told the thirtysecond session of the General Assembly: "... what must be wrong, therefore, is the lack of political willingness on the part of Member States to bring into being a more effective United Nations and our reluctance to accept to be guided in international gatherings by the norms of reason and justice."⁸²

Thus it is evident from the analysis supra that Afghanistan since its induction into the UN as a fullfledged member had played a constructive role in strengthening the world body. At the same time it also urged the other member countries to render full support and cooperation to the UN. It was through mutual cooperation and support that the United Nations could be strengthened.

The above-mentioned points highlight the main postulates of Afghan foreign policy. It is in the light of these basic postulates that the relations of Afghanistan with Super Powers in the post-Second World War would be analysed in the succeeding chapters.

⁸² Ibid., Thirtysecond session, Plen. Meeting 19, 19 October 1977, p. 348.

Chapter III

AFGHAN-SOVIET RELATIONS : THE POST-WAR PERIOD

This chapter purports to analyze the relations between Afghanistan from the post-World War II period until the advent of Soviet-backed communist coup in Kabul in April 1978. Relations between the two countries prior to the Second World War have been examined in the preceding second chapter.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, Afghanistan maintained a policy of strict neutrality throughout the course of the Second World War. Thus ending of the hostilities had least effect on the internal and external situation of Afghanistan. However, the global geopolitics underwent a tremendous change immediately after the war. The status of the United Kingdom (UK) as a great power had been relegated to the oblivion paving way for the United States. However the Soviet Union retained its great power status. Rather it emerged as much more stronger. As analyzed in the fourth chapter, the United States (US) declared its policy of global containment of communism and the Truman Doctrine inaugurated the onset of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, both Super Powers.

Despite the onset of the cold war in late 1945, Afghanistan was not faced with any immediate threat either from British India or Soviet Union. Thus, as a traditional adherent to the policy of strict and positive nonalignment, Afghanistan kept aloof from the manoeuvres of both the Super Powers. The then Afghan rulers addressed themselves to envisage an allround development of Afghanistan. In the early months of 1946, Shah Mahmud Khan took

over as Prime Minister of Afghanistan. In May 1946, Shah Mahmud declared that the principle of establishing friendly relations with all countries, especially with the neighbouring countries formed the bedrock of Afghan foreign policy.¹ On 13 June 1946, Kabul and Moscow signed an agreement to define the Amu river border, thus settling the ownership of some 1,191 islands.² However prior to signing this treaty, the Russians always claimed without justification that the Amu river's boundary lay on the southern bank - on Soviet side.³ Signing of this treaty showed a relatively benign post-war Soviet attitude to Afghanistan which was because "perhaps Afghanistan seemed too unimportant, too unthreatening to be worth the trouble and outcry of a territorial grab".⁴ Besides Moscow also wanted to get the sympathy of Afghanistan.

As stated earlier, the Afghan Government was addressing itself for promoting the economic development of Afghanistan. As the then Prime Minister Shah Mahmud said: "... for the first time in our history, we are free of the threat of great powers' using our mountain passes as pathways to empire. Now we can concentrate on talents and resources in bettering the living conditions of our people".⁵

1 Islah (Kabul), 15 May 1946.

2 For text of the Treaty see, United Nations (UN), Treaty Series, Vol. 31 (New York, 1949), pp. 147-68.

3 Roman T. Akhramovich, Outline History of Afghanistan After the Second World War (Moscow, 1966), p. 69.

4 Henry S. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (Durham, N.C. : Duke Press, 1983), p. 16.

5 New York Times, 9 August 1946.

Partition of Indian Subcontinent and Afghanistan

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in August 1947 resulted in the emergence of India and Pakistan as two independent sovereign countries. Pakistan emerged as the immediate neighbour of Afghanistan. A major area of Pushtunistan as a sequel to Durand Line demarcation of 1893⁶ had been inherited by Pakistan after the partition. "The Afghans saw perhaps their last chance to retrieve by negotiation their lost territories in the NWFP"⁷ which was originally annexed by the British. At the time of partition, the question of North-West Frontier Provinces (NWFP) was to be decided whether it should go to India or Pakistan. The Afghan case was that since it was the aggrieved party, it should have been involved. The plebiscite conducted under the aegis of the British awarded NWFP to Pakistan. It was claimed that 99 per cent of those who voted in the plebiscite opted union with Pakistan. However only 55.5 per cent of the enfranchised electorate turned out to vote.⁸ The Afghan Government rejected the "plebiscite" and thus the issue of "Pushtunistan" became the major irritant in Afghan-Pakistan relations. The detailed analysis on this aspect is beyond the scope of present study. The issue is analyzed in light of Afghan-Soviet relations.

6 See Chapter I.

7 Anthony Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective (Revised edn.) (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University), p. 26.

8 Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan's Big Gamble : Part II, Economic and Strategic Aspects of Soviet Aid", American University Field Staff Report (AUFS), vol. 4, no. 4, May 1960, p. 6.

On 26 July 1949, a Lovah Jirgah in Kabul formally and specifically abrogated all of its international treaties which supported the Durand Line as a border or which referred to the status of the Pushtuns.⁹

The Soviet Union after the Amu river agreement was gradually increasing its influence in Afghanistan. On 14 June 1946, the New York Times reported that the Soviet Embassy in Kabul had about 600 personnel and Soviet officers were imparting training to the Afghan Air Force personnel.¹⁰

On the Pushtun issue, the Soviet Union supported Afghan stand. The Soviet scholar A. Dyakov commented that the British and Americans were planning to establish military bases in the Pushtun region.¹¹ Another Soviet scholar, E. Atramonov while supporting the Afghan stand on Pushtunistan, wrote that UK and United States were determined to create instability in the region by inciting Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹²

In 1947, there was an agreement to establish a telegraph link between Kabul and Tashkent. In the wake of its strained relations with Pakistan over Pushtun issue, and a Super Power as its neighbour, the Afghan Government sought military and economic assistance from the United States in 1948-49. However it got

9 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 492.

10 New York Times, 14 June 1946.

11 For details see, A. Dyakov, "A Partitioned India", New Times (Moscow), 14 January 1948.

12 E. Atramonov, "How the British and American Imperialists are Interfering in the Afghan-Pakistan Dispute", *ibid.*, 22 June 1949.

only economic assistance and military aid was denied because US preference was for Pakistan. This aspect is discussed in details in Chapter IV. It is suffice here to say that the US refusal to accede to Afghan request for supply of arms was one of the main blunders which made Kabul dependent on Moscow for arms supplies.

Beginning of Soviet Opportunities

The Soviet ventures in post-war Afghanistan commenced with economic aid. In July 1950, Moscow and Kabul signed a four year trade agreement which envisaged Soviet petroleum products, cotton, cloth, sugar and other commodities in exchange for Afghan goods - wool, fur, raw cotton, fruits and nuts at a higher currency exchange rates and duty free exchange.¹³

Pakistan's joining of US sponsored military alliances - Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in September 1954 and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1955, further heightened Afghan apprehensions of Pak military might. The US refusal to provide military assistance to Afghanistan in October 1954 made Afghanistan feel dejected. In the meanwhile, Sardar Mohammad Daoud took over as Prime Minister of Afghanistan in 1953 and he wanted to make Afghanistan a strong and prosperous country.

In January 1954, Kabul and Moscow signed a major agreement in terms of which the Soviets lent \$ 3.5 million for the construction of grain elevators at Kabul and Pul-i-Khumri and a flour mill and bakery at Kabul.¹⁴ Until the death of Stalin on 5 March 1953,

13 Dupree, n. 8, p. 3.

14 Marshal I. Goldman, Soviet Foreign Aid (New York, 1967), p. 115. Also see Peter G. Franck, Afghanistan between East and West (Washington, 1960), p. 55.

Moscow had not favoured the policy of forging close relations with the Third World countries. When Khrushchev succeeded Stalin, the official policy towards Third World began to change quickly. According to Rubinstein, Moscow began to represent itself abroad as the champion of developing countries, helping the latter to establish economic as well as political independence.¹⁵ The Soviet leader, Khrushchev in 1953 told visiting US Congressmen that "We value trade least for economic and most for political reasons".¹⁶ Thus it becomes evident that after 1953, Moscow adopted the strategy of using economic aid as a bait to hoodwink the developing countries into its orbit of influence. In pursuance of this policy, Moscow augmented its economic assistance to Kabul. In July 1954 an agreement worth \$ 1.2 million was signed between the two countries for the construction of a gasoline pipeline across the Amu river.¹⁷ In August 1954, another agreement worth \$ 2 million was signed between the two countries for road building equipment.¹⁸ Again in October 1954, Soviet Union advanced another loan worth \$ 2.1 million which provided for an asphalt factory and equipment.¹⁹ According to Bradsher: "These were early examples of a Soviet talent for getting maximum propaganda value from aid projects..."²⁰ On 28 June 1955, Afghanistan negotiated a new

15 Alvin Z. Rubinstein, The Foreign Policy of Soviet Union (New York, 1960), pp. 395-7.

16 Ibid., p. 383.

17 Goldman, n. 14, p. 115.

18 Franck, n. 14, pp. 56-58.

19 Ibid.

20 Bradsher, n. 4, p. 24.

agreement on duty-free transit of Afghan goods through Soviet territory based on Article 6 of the 1921 treaty between the two countries.²¹

Khrushchev and Bulganin's Visit to Afghanistan

On 15 December 1955, the First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Nikita S. Khrushchev and Soviet Premier, Nikolai A. Bulganin, paid an official visit to Afghanistan. The Soviet dignitaries were given a rousing welcome at the Kabul airport by King Zahir Shah and Prime Minister, Sardar Mohammad Dauod,²² and other Government officials. While thanking the Afghan people, Bulganin hoped that the visit would help in forging closer relations between the two countries.²³

The visiting Soviet leaders being aware of the Afghan sentiments over Pushtunistan said: "We sympathise with Afghanistan's policy on the question of Pushtunistan. The Soviet Union stands for an equitable solution of this problem which cannot be settled correctly without taking into account the vital interests of the people inhabiting Pushtunistan".²⁴ The Afghan Prime Minister, Sardar Mohammad Dauod in his welcome address said that Afghanistan was the staunch adherent of the principles of nonalignment; "Afghanistan will accept economic assistance with gratitude but it

21 Arnold, n. 7, p. 35.

22 Islah, 16 December 1955.

23 N.A. Bulganin and N.S. Khrushchev, Speeches During Sojourn in India, Burma and Afghanistan, November-December 1955 (New Delhi, 1956), p. 173.

24 Ibid., p. 175.

should not be linked with political strings".²⁵

Both the Soviet leaders also announced the gift of 100-bed hospital to be built in Kabul with Russian aid. It was also promised that Soviet Union will give a credit worth \$ 100 million repayable in thirty years at two per cent interest.²⁶ The Soviet leaders also visited the military training school at Kabul and thereafter Bulganin said that his country fully appreciated the Afghan desire for modernizing their armed forces.²⁷ After paying a five day visit to Afghanistan, the Soviet leaders returned to Moscow.

While recounting the Soviet thinking during this period on Afghanistan, Khrushchev later in his memoirs said:

America was courting Afghanistan, appearing to give that country economic aid but actually being much more interested in carrying political favour... At the time of our visit it was clear to us that the Americans were penetrating Afghanistan with the obvious purpose of setting up military base... The capital which we've invested in Afghanistan hasn't been wasted. We have earned the Afghan's trust and friendship, and it has not fallen into the American trap... The amount of money we spent in gratuitous assistance to Afghanistan is a drop in the ocean compared to the price we would have had to pay in order to counter the threat of an American military base on Afghan territory. 28

The Soviet leaders extended an invitation to the Afghan leaders to visit Soviet Union and Prime Minister Daud accepted the invitation.²⁹

26 Goldman, n. 14, p. 115. Also see Dupree, n. 9, pp. 508-9.

27 Bulganin and Khrushchev, n. 23, p. 176.

28 Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers (Boston, 1971), pp. 560-2.

29 Isiah, 19 December 1955.

On 18 December 1955, both the countries concluded a treaty under which the Article 8 of the Treaty of June 1931 ensuring the neutrality and non-aggression was amended and the treaty was extended for further ten years. It also contained a provision that either side could abrogate the treaty by giving an advance notice of six months.³⁰

Following the visit of the Soviet leaders to Afghanistan, the Kremlin started evincing keen interest in Kabul. In March 1956, the projects selected by a joint Afghan-Soviet survey team, though excluding railroads, were linked to a large extent with creating and modernizing other transportation facilities. These included two airport projects, one major highway linking Kabul with the strategic Soviet border, one river port facility, construction of bridge, auto repair workshops etc.³¹

In March 1956, both countries signed an agreement that provided for regular flights between Tashkent and Kabul.³² The Article VI of this agreement provides a curious fact of Soviet strategic concerns in Afghanistan: "Each side has the right to refuse or amend flight permission to the other if it does not have proof that the majority ownership or actual control of that enterprise is being realized by citizens or organs of that country".³³ This provision makes it evident that Moscow did not

30 For details of the Treaty see, Bulganin and Khrushchev, n. 23, pp. 188-92.

31 Franck, n. 14, p. 57.

32 Y.M. Vinogradov, et al, eds., Sovetsko-Afghanskive Otnosheniya 1919-1969 (Moscow, 1971), pp. 129-34 as cited in Arnold, n. 7, p. 36.

33 Ibid.

want any other country to challenge the Soviet monopoly in Afghanistan. At that period, 49 per cent of the Ariana Afghan Airlines, the only airlines of Afghanistan, with which the Soviets had concluded the said agreement, was owned by one Peter Baldwin, an American businessman who had sported that airlines in April 1955.³⁴ At this juncture the inclusion of such a provision in the agreement insisted by Moscow aimed at alleviating the American influence. However, in 1957, the Pan American Airways bought out Baldwin's share in the Ariana Airway for \$ 400 thousand and actively helped the Ariana with its operation and maintenance problems for more than two decades thereafter.³⁵

During March 1956, another agreement was signed between Kabul and Moscow under which the Soviet specialists were to be stationed in Afghanistan for the purpose of establishing, maintaining and training the Afghan personnel regarding various projects to be jointly set up.³⁶ These Soviet specialists were also supposed to oversee the Afghan construction activities according to the approved project plans.

In January 1956, the Soviet Vice-President A. Mikoyan visited Afghanistan during which the earlier mentioned agreement with \$ 100 million credit was signed.³⁷ In February 1956, the

34 Louis Dupree, "American Private Enterprise in Afghanistan : The Investment Climate as it Relates to One Company", AUFS, vol. 4, no. 9, December 1960, p. 4.

35 Franck, n. 14, p. 461.

36 Arnold, n. 7, p. 38.

37 Islah, 29 January 1956.

Soviet leaders sent messages of greetings to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty of 1931.³⁸ Soviet media and scholars tried to project a rosy picture of "friendly relations" between Moscow and Kabul and emphasised that Soviet economic assistance to Afghanistan was without any "political strings".³⁹

Prime Minister Dauod's Visit to Russia

On 17 October 1956, Sardar Moharmad Dauod reached Moscow on an official visit. He was given a warm welcome on his arrival.⁴⁰ The leading Soviet daily Pravda in its issue of 18 October 1956 while welcoming the visit of Afghan Prime Minister commented that Afghan-Soviet friendship had stood the test of time.⁴¹

Concluding his fortnight's visit to the Soviet Union, the Afghan Prime Minister said that his visit had been very fruitful because there had been a frank exchange of views between the leaders of the two countries.⁴² However Sardar Mohammad Dauod remained very cautious about his views on global issues. He stressed emphasis on Afghanistan's traditional policy of neutrality.

King Zahir Shah's Visit to Soviet Union

In July 1957, the King of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, along with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Naim

38 Moscow News (Moscow), 29 February 1956.

39 For details see S. Ineutin and V. Peterkhov, "The Consolidation of Soviet-Afghan Friendship and Cooperation", International Affairs (Moscow), no.1, January 1956, pp. 41-49.

40 Islah, 18 October 1956.

41 Moscow News, 20 October 1956.

42 Ibid., 30 October 1956.

and other ministers visited Soviet Union. They were given warm welcome on their arrival in Moscow.⁴³ In his welcome address the Soviet President Varashilov said that the visit of Afghan King was of tremendous significance because it was symbolic of the growing friendship between the two countries professing different political systems.⁴⁴

In his reply the Afghan King referred to the growing friendly relations between the two countries. On 30 July 1957, at the conclusion of the visit of King Zahir Shah, a joint communique was issued. Both the countries expressed their faith in the principles of peaceful coexistence and Afghanistan was praised for pursuing the policy of strict neutrality.⁴⁵ According to a report published in Pravda of 31 July 1957, the Foreign Ministers of both countries agreed in principle to concluded an agreement regarding the demarcation of border areas between the two countries.⁴⁶ The Soviet Union attached great importance to this visit because since King Amanullah's visit, it was the second visit by any Afghan King to the Soviet Union. Moscow promised Kabul to advance a credit worth \$ 15 million for the development of natural gas exports to the Soviet Union.⁴⁷

43 Pravda (Moscow), 18 July 1957, cited in New Times (Moscow), July 1957.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 31 July 1957.

46 Ibid.

47 Franek, n. 14, p. 57.

Augmentation of Soviet Military Influence

The beginning of 1950s had witnessed the inauguration of the penetration of Soviet military influence in Afghanistan. According to Bradsher, Afghanistan was first in the Third World to receive Soviet economic aid and second to receive military aid.⁴⁸ In August 1955, Afghanistan negotiated a cash deal worth \$ 3 million for Czechoslovak weapons.⁴⁹ According to Anthony Arnold, "Afghanistan signed an agreement with the Soviet Union in August 1956 on re-equipping Afghanistan's armed forces with Soviet materials". Of necessity, given the complexity of modern armaments, this agreement involved the training of Afghan officers in Soviet military schools and the stationing of Soviet experts at Afghan military bases. This gave the USSR an opportunity for assessing and recruiting individual officers to serve Soviet political aims is self-evident, and it was not ignored.⁵⁰

In the wake of these developments, many observers on Afghanistan apprehended that Daud was pushing his country into Soviet vassalage. Others perceived his actions as a high-risk gamble to improve his country's lot by playing off the great powers against each other.⁵¹ However Louis Dupree is optimistic of Daud's policies during 1950s. According to him, Afghanistan had become an "economic Korea where the competition between the

48 Bradsher, n. 4, p. 27.

49 "Soviet Bloc Economic Activities in the Near East and Asia as of November 25, 1955" in the Declassified Documents Retrospective Collective (Washington, 1976), 3f.

50 Arnold, n. 7, p. 38.

51 Ibid.

East and the West benefited a local population without endangering its independence".⁵² During 1956-58, Afghanistan got substantial economic assistance from Moscow as well as Washington. Between 1950 to 1959, the US assistance to Afghanistan totalled to \$ 143 million, while the Soviet assistance amounted to \$ 246.2 million. The bulk of the US assistance comprised in the form of outright grants, the Soviet provided long-term loans.⁵³ The US objective in augmenting its Afghan share of aid aimed at securing "maximum internal political stability, promoting friendly economic relations with her [Afghanistan's] Free World neighbours; and minimizing any possibility that Afghanistan might either be a victim of, or a pathway for, Soviet domination in South Asia."⁵⁴

However, a close analysis of the Soviet strategy of extending economic assistance and trade facilities to Afghanistan reveals that between 1950 and 1960, Kabul's dependence on Moscow for arms had become almost hundred per cent, for petroleum products from 10 per cent to 90 per cent and in case of foreign trade from 17 per cent to almost 50 per cent.⁵⁵

Under the cover of providing economic assistance for transportation and road construction, the Soviet Union was also concentrating on strategic areas. The Soviet highway project that ran from the Soviet border at Kushka to Herat and Kandahar,

52 Dupree, n. 9, pp. 5151-16.

53 Richard S. Newell, Politics of Afghanistan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 128-9.

54 Franck, n. 14, p. 72.

55 Dupree, n. 8, p. 3.

linked up there with the other highway to Kabul being constructed by the US assistance. Thus the Kremlin was building up strategic highways linking its border with important parts of Afghanistan which it could use one day for exerting its control over that country, as happened in December 1979. Moscow had stipulated such clauses in its agreements with Kabul which it could exploit at short notice. Article 21 of the border agreement between the two countries signed on 18 January 1958 envisaged that at 48-hour notice either side could examine those parts of international bridges linking the two countries that were situated on the other side's territory.⁵⁶

In May 1959, Moscow and Kabul signed another agreement on building the Kushka-Kandhar road. In July 1959 both countries signed another agreement regarding the construction of three new bridges across the Besud, Kameh and Asmar Rivers. The construction of the bridges was to be carried out by the Afghan workers under the supervision of Soviet Union.⁵⁷

Khrushchev's Visit to Kabul

On 2 March 1960, the Soviet Premier N. Khrushchev visited Afghanistan. King Zahir Shah while welcoming the visit of Soviet Prime Minister, hoped that the relations between the two countries would improve further.⁵⁸ Khrushchev lauded Afghan foreign policy

⁵⁶ Vinogradov, et al., n. 32, p. 156, as cited in Arnold, n. 7, p. 39.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 179-82.

⁵⁸ Happiness And Peace for the Peoples: N.S. Khrushchev's Visit to India, Burma, Indonesia and Afghanistan February 11 - March 5, 1960 (Moscow, 1960), p. 266.

of nonalignment, international peace and economic development. He also referred to the growing political, economic and cultural relations between Soviet Union and Afghanistan.⁵⁹

Just a couple of months ago, prior to Khrushchev's visit to Afghanistan, Soviet Union and Afghanistan had signed an agreement in January 1960 in which Moscow promised to give economic assistance worth \$ 22.4 million during the five year development plan for 1960-65.⁶⁰ Even during his visit in March 1960, Khrushchev offered to finance the entire Afghan five year plan for 1960-65 on the condition that Soviet advisers be placed at the highest levels in all Afghan ministries. But Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Sardar Mohammad Daoud, was cautiously skeptical and he reportedly turned down the Soviet offer.⁶¹

The visiting Soviet Premier visited various projects launched with the Soviet help. In a dinner hosted by Soviet leader Khrushchev in favour of Afghan Prime Minister, Mohammad Daoud on 4 March 1960, the Soviet Premier repeatedly emphasized the fact that it was Soviet leader, Lenin, who first recognized the independence of Afghanistan.⁶² The Prime Minister of Afghanistan, Sardar Mohammad Daoud, in his reply, said that Soviet Union under the leadership of Lenin recognized independence of Afghanistan and the latter also took no time in according

59 Ibid., pp. 266-7.

60 New York Times, 21 January 1960.

61 Louis Dupree, "The Mountains Go to Mohammed Zahir", AUFSR, vol. 4, no. 6,

62 Khrushchev's Visits, n. 58, pp. 288-90.

recognition to the new Government which assumed power after the October Revolution.⁶³ This was characteristic of Dauod to tell the Soviets that Afghanistan did not lag behind in repaying the gratitude it owed to others.

On 4 March 1960, both countries signed a cultural agreement to promote and cooperate in the fields of science, art and culture.⁶⁴ The joint communique issued on 5 March 1960 at the conclusion of Soviet Premier's visit to Kabul, reiterated the desire of both countries to further improve their relations.⁶⁵

The above analysis makes it evident that Afghan leadership while accepting Soviet economic and technical assistance, did not compromise the foreign policy of Afghanistan but rather secured Soviet endorsement of Afghanistan's independent and non-aligned policy. In early 1963, Sardar Dauod Khan resigned as Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Some Western experts on Afghanistan are of the view that Sardar Dauod during his premiership (1953-63) allowed Soviet influence to increase in Afghanistan unhindered. According to Leon B. Poullada, during Dauod's rule of a decade "the USSR had established a firm base of operation in Afghanistan".⁶⁶

However Prime Minister Sardar Mohammad Dauod until 1963 had remained cautiously skeptical about the Soviet motives in

63 Ibid., p. 291.

64 Ibid., pp. 293-6.

65 Ibid., pp. 302-3.

66 Leon B. Poullada, "The Failure of American Diplomacy in Afghanistan", World Affairs (Washington), vol. 145, no. 3, Winter 1982/83, p. 242.

Afghanistan. In reply to a question about Soviet subversion in 1956, Dauod had, while referring to the 1948 Communist takeover in that country, replied: "Does anyone think we have not heard of Czechoslovakia?"⁶⁷

Poullada cites another example to prove his dictum that Dauod dismissed in 1956 a warning from an American Ambassador that Soviet economic aid was laying a logistical infrastructure for invasion and the Soviet training of Afghan military officers could create a fifth column in the armed forces.⁶⁸ Such misgivings about Dauod's foreign policy might have been prompted in the light of the fact that he ignored such "warnings" or "advices".

Despite heavy US arms and economic assistance to Pakistan during 1953-63, with which Afghanistan had strained relations over the issue of Pushtunistan, Dauod neither criticized the United States nor sought massive arms aid from the Soviet Union; rather he pursued a policy of genuine nonalignment. Dauod had declared sometime in 1960: "Our whole life, our whole existence, revolves around one single focal point - freedom. Should we ever get the feeling that our freedom is in the slightest danger, from whatever quarter, then we should prefer to live on dry bread, or even starve, sooner than accept help that would restrict our

67 Quoted in Bradsher, n. 4, p. 27.

68 Leon B. Poullada, "Afghanistan and the United States: The Crucial Years", The Middle East Journal, vol. 35 (1981), p. 187.

freedom."⁶⁹ By the early 1960s, the people of Afghanistan had realized that:

... Soviet actions were always motivated by their own interests and by those alone. But [the Afghans] reasoned assuming Soviet planners to be reasonable men, those interests could only be augmented by an attack on Afghanistan. The country would be an economic liability to the USSR, to control it would be difficult and costly; and most important, any such aggression would have disastrous repercussions among the neutralist nations in Asia and Africa. 70

Thus on the basis of above analysis, it is clear that though during the period 1953-63, Soviet Union did render considerable economic assistance to woo Afghanistan to its fold, the latter did not fall a prey to Soviet overtures and pursued an independent and genuinely nonaligned foreign policy.

Following the ouster of Sardar Mohammad Daud in 1963, Dr. Mohammed Yusuf Khan became the new Prime Minister of Afghanistan. He could remain in office for a short time and in October 1965, Mohammed Hashim Maiwandwal was appointed as the new Prime Minister of Afghanistan.

Mohammad Zahir Shah, the King of Afghanistan paid an official visit to the USSR from 3 to 16 August 1965. The King's entourage was accompanied by other ministers and officials of Afghanistan.⁷¹ During the visit the Afghan King had meetings

69 Quoted in Gunther Nollau and Hans Jurgenwiche, Russia's South Flank (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 136.

70 Arnold Fletcher, Afghanistan: Highway to Conquest (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965), p. 261.

71 United States, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 608.

with Leonid Brezhnev, A.N. Kosygin and other Soviet leaders. The talks between the leaders of the two countries proceeded in an atmosphere of friendship, sincerity and mutual understanding.⁷²

The two sides expressed full satisfaction with the continuous development of friendship which had a traditional basis and mutual confidence, and comprehensive cooperation between the two countries. Both sides reaffirmed that they would not permit any damage to be done to these relations.⁷³

The joint communique issued at the end of Afghan King's visit to Soviet Union also noted the conviction of both countries that "the friendship and cooperation between the peoples of their countries is a brilliant example of the realization of the principles of peaceful co-existence of states with different economic, social and political systems and that there is an important factor in the consolidation of peace in this part of the world and corresponds to the sincere designs of all the peoples of the world."⁷⁴ It was further acknowledged that the Soviet economic assistance had played important role in implementing the first and second five year plans for the development of Afghanistan and that the "continuation of this assistance toward the realization of the third five year plan will have a great and positive effect on the economic development of Afghanistan".⁷⁵

⁷² Ibid., p. 609.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

The Afghanistan side emphasised and reaffirmed its policy of neutrality and nonalignment which was in the interest of the people of Afghanistan and of peace throughout the world. The Soviet side reaffirmed that "this policy of Afghanistan is an important contribution to the cause of relaxation of international tension and the strengthening of peace and friendship among the people".⁷⁶ Thus the visit of Afghan King to Moscow proved instrumental in procuring Soviet endorsement of Afghan foreign policy.

Between 1963-73 the Soviet-Afghan relations continued on the friendly pattern. There was no major point of departure in the traditionally friendly relationship. Between 1967-70, the value of Russian assistance approximated 70 per cent of the total aid received by Afghanistan from all sources.⁷⁷ On 6 February 1968 both Afghanistan and Soviet Union signed an agreement for economic and technical assistance. Under this and earlier agreements, Afghanistan was bound to export 2.5 billion cubic metres of natural gas, on average, to the Soviet Union upto the year 1985.⁷⁸ Though under the agreement of 1968, it was envisaged that the prices of the natural gas would be "determined by the two sides" but in practice the Soviet Union unilaterally determined the price it would pay and controlled all information regarding the quantum of gas it imported. "In fact, the Soviet Union never paid

76 Ibid., p. 610.

77 Newell, n. 53, p. 147.

78 Abdul Tawab Assifi, "The Russian Rope: Soviet Economic Motives and the Subversion of Afghanistan", World Affairs (Washington), vol. 145, no. 3, Winter 1982/83, p. 255.

Afghanistan more than twenty percent of the going world market price for natural gas".⁷⁹

Afghanistan and Brezhnev Doctrine

In the wake of growing schism between Soviet Union and People's Republic of China (PRC) in the late 1960s, Moscow sought to isolate China from the world Communist movement and in Asia. In late May 1969, the then Soviet Prime Minister A. Kosygin during his visit to Kabul, proposed regional economic cooperation among Afghanistan, Pakistan and India as a step toward creating peaceful environment in the region.⁸⁰ On 7 June 1969, the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev, while addressing the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow, declared: "We are of the opinion that the course of events is putting on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia".⁸¹ This concept of collective security in Asia came to be known as "Brezhnev Doctrine". The Soviet leader Brezhnev did not elaborate his doctrine in 1969. However, it was on 30 March 1972, that Brezhnev stated:

Collective security in Asia must, in our view, be based on such principles as renunciation of use of force in relations between states, respect for sovereignty and the inviolability of borders, noninterference in internal affairs and the broad development of economic and other cooperation on the basis of full equality and mutual development. ⁸²

79 Ibid., p. 256.

80 Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "The Last Years of Peaceful Coexistence: Soviet Afghan Relations 1963-1978", The Middle East Journal, vol. 36, no. 2, Spring 1982, p. 170.

81 New York Times, 8 June 1969.

82 Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter FBIS), FBIS/USSR, 21 March 1972.

In pursuance of Brezhnev Doctrine, the Soviet Union wooed Afghanistan to endorse the plan for Asian collective security. However, Afghanistan kept cool towards this plan and reiterated its commitment to the policy of nonalignment. During May 1973, the Soviet President, Podgorny visited Kabul. The joint communique issued after his visit spoke of the great importance which the Soviet Union attached to "Afghanistan's policy of positive neutrality and nonalignment". It further noted:

Considering that observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with differing social and political systems is an effective way toward establishing lasting peace both in Asia and other parts of the world, the USSR and Afghanistan again declare that in order to guarantee security in Asia it is essential for all countries of the area to make joint efforts in that direction. 83

However this could not be considered as Afghan endorsement of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Afghan-Soviet Relations During Daoud Period (July 1973 - April 1978)

Sardar Mohammad Daoud who had resigned in 1963, seized power in Kabul in July 1973 in a bloodless coup by overthrowing the monarchy. After about a year of his assumption of power, President Sardar Mohammad Daoud paid an official visit from 4-7 June 1974 to Soviet Union and "accepted Soviet-drafted language in a joint communique endorsing the Brezhnev Doctrine".⁸⁴ The joint communique noted: "The Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan are deeply interested in ensuring peace and cooperation in Asia and

83 FBIS/USSR, 26 May 1973.

84 A.G. Noorani, "Soviet Ambitions in Soviet Asia", International Security, vol. 11, Winter 1979-80, p. 41.

consider that the creation of a system of security by the collective efforts of all the states of Asia would correspond to the interests of the Asian peoples".⁸⁵ The Soviets proved themselves clever enough to extract Afghan endorsement of Soviet plan but did not repay the favour. Both Moscow Radio and Tass omitted⁸⁶ reference to Pakistan from Dauod's speech at Kremlin banquet. After having private talks with President Dauod, the Soviet President Podgorny publicly said that Afghanistan's "great and complex tasks [of] renovating political, economic and cultural life ... can be solved successfully, when the course charted is pursued firmly, when broad popular masses are drawn into the work of building a new life and when the forces which are sincerely interested in strengthening the new system act vigorously and in close unity".⁸⁷ This was a direct suggestion by the Soviets to President Dauod to work closely with the pro-Moscow communists of Afghanistan. Henry S. Bradsher has also supported the analysis.⁸⁸ Soviet Union also granted an interest free ten year moratorium on a \$ 100 million debt and promised another \$ 428 million in⁸⁹ development aid to Afghanistan.

In December 1975, the Soviet President, Podgorny visited Afghanistan. Unlike earlier visits, this visit lacked enthusiasm, both in Kabul and Moscow. The official Soviet reports spoke coolly

⁸⁵ FBIS/USSR, 10 June 1974, J. 4.

⁸⁶ See Ibid., 4-12 June 1974.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 6 June 1974, pp. J1-3.

⁸⁸ Bradsher, n. 4, p. 64.

⁸⁹ The Economist (London), 3 August 1974, pp. 29-30.

of Podgorny's visit to Afghanistan and made reference to Soviet-Afghan relations in a stereotyped fashion.⁹⁰ The joint communique issued after the visit of President Podgorny made only an oblique reference to Asian security plan without any mention of Afghan endorsement.⁹¹ One could notice the "cool-off" stage in Afghan-Soviet relations.

Perhaps by then Sardar Mohammad Dauod had realized that the growing Soviet influence was contrary to Afghanistan's traditional policy of genuine nonalignment. Thus with a view to alleviate Afghan economic dependence on Soviet Union and keeping in consonance with the principles of nonalignment, President Dauod took positive measures to improve Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan, Iran, and other Islamic countries. In October 1974, Iran promised Afghanistan to provide \$ 2 billion in economic aid over a period of ten years, and a part of this aid was to be spent on the construction of a railroad from Kabul to Iran, which eventually would have provided Afghanistan with a trade route through Iranian ports, thereby decreasing Afghan dependence on Soviet trade.⁹² This shows that President Dauod was following an independent and nonaligned policy by developing close relations with nonaligned and Islamic countries.

President Dauod visited Soviet Union from 12 to 15 April 1977. Before visiting Soviet Union, President Dauod had taken

90 FBIS/USSR, 10 December 1975.

91 Ibid., 17 December 1975, pp. J1-3.

92 Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan 1977 : Does Trade Plus Aid Guarantee Development?" AUFESR, vol. 21, no. 3, August 1977, p. 3.

certain measures in his own country which included the removal of Soviet military advisers from the lower levels of the Afghan armed forces.⁹³ In the Soviet Union, Brezhnev had become President by removing Podgorny.

An analysis of the statements made by the Soviet Union and Afghan President in Moscow during the visit do not show that Afghan-Soviet relations had deteriorated. The Soviet President, Leonid Brezhnev, did ask his Afghan counterpart about the need for a "concerted effort of all the people".⁹⁴ However President Dauod was more frank when he said that good relations "stand on the firm foundations of good neighbourliness, frankness, sincerity and disinterested and worthwhile cooperation".⁹⁵ While reiterating his Government's decision to promote economic development, President Dauod said that his country was "creating premises for rapid socio-economic and political development ... [that] demand all round efforts from the people and government of Afghanistan. Cooperation and disinterested aid from friendly states will play a valuable part in this undertaking".⁹⁶ The communique issued at the end of the visit envisaged that talks took place in an atmosphere of "friendship, trust and understanding and there was a circumstantial exchange of opinions on urgent world problems".⁹⁷ On his return to Kabul from Moscow, President Dauod expressed his confidence that the

⁹³ Bradsher, n. 4, p. 65.

⁹⁴ FBIS/USSR, 13 April 1977, pp. J3-5.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. J5-9.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 18 April 1977, pp. J1-3.

relations between Afghanistan and Soviet Union were based on "good neighbourliness, mutual respect and non-interference in domestic affairs".⁹⁸

However Bradsher claims that "Daud's proclaimed confidence was more diplomatic than real".⁹⁹ Most of the scholars agree that there was hot exchange of views between President Daud and Soviet leaders. Thomas T. Hammond has quoted an incident, which is based on his interviews with persons having close contacts with Afghan developments.¹⁰⁰ According to this account during President Daud's visit to Moscow, Brezhnev addressed the Afghan President in a rude manner and raised objections to certain policies pursued by the Afghan Government. President Daud then reportedly told Brezhnev: "I want to remind you that you are speaking to the President of an independent country, not one of your East European satellites. You are trying to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and this I will not permit". Thus, it is evident that Sardar Mohammad Daud behaved in a true Afghan tradition.

There is no doubt that there were signs of deteriorating relations between Kabul and Moscow during the mid 1970s and Moscow seemed to be displeased with Daud Government in Kabul.

98 Ibid., p. J-4.

99 Bradsher, n. 4, p. 65.

100 Thomas T. Hammond, Red Flag Over Afghanistan (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1984).

This incident is also substantiated by Henry S. Bradsher who after interviewing various Afghan officials in Kabul has confirmed it. See Bradsher, n. 4, pp. 65-66.

Chapter IV

AFGHAN-U.S. RELATIONS

This chapter endeavours to make an indepth analysis of Afghan-US relations since their advent till April 1978 when the Soviet backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power in Kabul by staging a bloody coup.

Afghan-US Relations Unto the end of Second World War

The formal diplomatic relations between Kabul and Washington were established in 1940s but efforts in this direction were initiated during King Amanullah's time. However it was during the middle of nineteenth century that some American missionaries made efforts to establish contacts with Afghanistan. The American Presbyterian missionaries made a pioneering attempt to direct contact with the Afghans.¹ They established a mission at Ludhiana, where several prominent Afghan refugees, including the former Amir Zaman Shah and Shah Shuja were staying.² However, the American missionaries failed to establish contacts among "the exiled Afghan leaders or their retines".³

Until the advent of the regime of King Amanullah in 1919, there were virtually no direct or indirect contacts between Kabul and Washington. King Amanullah gave a new direction to Afghan

1 Vartan Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan (California, 1969), p. 69.

2 For details see, Eugene Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society, Its Environment, Its Men and Its Work, Vol. 4 (London, 1916), pp. 209-10.

3 Gregorian, n. 1, p. 69.

foreign policy by seeking to establish friendly relations with Soviet Union, United Kingdom (UK) and Turkey. Amanullah sent his personal emissary to explore the possibilities of establishing friendly relations with the United States and other European countries.

In July 1921, an Afghan mission headed by Mohammed Wali Khan visited the United States.⁴ On his arrival in New York on 11 July 1921, Mohammed Wali Khan said that he had come to explore the possibilities of establishing friendly relations between Afghanistan and the United States.⁵ Prior to his meeting with the then US Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes, Wali Khan told the press on 17 July 1921 that the establishment of relations between Afghanistan and the United States would provide ample opportunities⁶ for American businessmen to invest in Afghanistan. However despite all such optimistic pronouncements Wali Khan was not sure about the success of his mission.⁷ Leader of the Afghan mission met some officials of the State Department of the US before he could meet the Secretary of State. However, the New York Times commented that the welcome accorded to the Afghan Mission by the United States could not be interpreted as US recognition of King Amanullah's regime in Kabul.⁸ The then US Secretary of State, Charles E. Hughes, wrote to the US President on 18 July 1921: "Apparently we have,

4 New York Times, 12 July 1921.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., 18 July 1921.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., 20 July 1921.

hitherto, had no relations with Afghanistan directly as formerly our dealings with that country were through Great Britain. In 1919 Great Britain "recognized the independence of Afghanistan".⁹ However, the UK did not like Afghan policy of foreign relations with other European powers. Hughes in his letter to the President conveyed the British feelings about Afghan Mission that "the British Government did not look with favour on its [Afghan Mission's] activities or its endeavours to conclude agreements with other Governments, as Afghanistan, though ostensibly independent, was still within the British 'sphere of political influence'".¹⁰

The US Secretary of State expressed the view that there was no way of having relations with Afghanistan "at that time unless they are had directly and there is nothing in the British position which precludes our reception of the [Afghan] Mission".¹¹ The US was aware of Afghanistan's Treaty of Friendship with Soviet Union, signed in September 1920, and ratified by Afghanistan in August 1921. The US Secretary of State, Hughes, expressed the view that Afghanistan's relations with the Soviet Union did not prevent the United States to establish close relations with Kabul. He wrote to President Harding that "the Soviet Government had dealings with other powers with which we are in relations and I do not believe that the Soviet Treaty with Afghanistan furnishes

9 United States, "Secretary of State to President Harding", 18 July 1921, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1921 (hereafter US Foreign Relations), Vol. I (Washington, 1930), p. 258.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

a reason for precluding ourselves from the opportunities which otherwise might be open in that country".¹² Thus the US Secretary of State advised the US President to receive the Afghan Mission and opined that he did not think "however, that pending further inquiries, it is necessary or advisable to go beyond their courteous reception".¹³

Consequently, the Afghan Mission was received by the Secretary of State on 20 July 1921. Secretary Hughes in another letter to the President Harding on 21 July 1921 informed the latter that the Afghan Mission was in the United States for the establishment of diplomatic relations."¹⁴ There did not prevail or exist formal or informal diplomatic relations between Kabul and Washington. In view of the fact that the Great Britain had "relinquished her protectorate"¹⁵ over Afghanistan, the United States could establish direct relations with Afghanistan. But the then US Secretary of State did not favour the establishment of direct diplomatic relations with Afghanistan. He advised the President that "nothing further should be said at this time and that the matter will be taken under careful consideration".¹⁶

The Afghan Mission met the US President Harding on 26 July 1921. Mohammed Wali Khan, leader of the Afghan Mission, handed over a personal letter from the Afghan King, Amanullah, to

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., p. 259.

14 "Secretary of State to President Harding", 21 July 1921, *ibid.*, pp. 259-60.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

President Hardinge. Amir Amanullah wrote: "As I used to have the sincere wish to establish permanent friendly relations between Afghanistan and the high Government of the United States, I expect that Your Excellency's high Government may be satisfied with the keeping of that friendly relations too."¹⁷ President Hardinge in his reply to Amanullah's letter wrote:

It is my wish that the relations between the United States and Afghanistan may always be of a friendly character, and I shall be happy to cooperate with Your Majesty to this end. I am constrained, however, to confirm to Your Majesty, what was stated orally to G. Mohammed Wali Khan, that with respect to the United States, the question of the creation of a Diplomatic Mission and of the appropriate action to that end by the Congress of the United States must be reserved for further consideration. 18

It becomes clear from the above analysis that the United States had deferred the Afghan request of establishing diplomatic relations between Kabul and Washington. The fact that the US did not recognize Amanullah's regime in 1921 could not be interpreted as the negation of US interest in Afghanistan.

There occurred a spell of about four years when there was discernible effort on either side to resume negotiations on establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries. In October 1925, the Afghan Ambassador to France, Nadir Khan, contacted the US Ambassador in France, Merrick, in that connection. On 30 October 1925, Nadir Khan wrote a letter to Merrick urging him to resume negotiations regarding the

17 Amir Amanullah's letter to President Hardinge (no date), *ibid.*, p. 260.

18 President Hardinge to Amir Amanullah, 29 July 1921, *ibid.*, p. 261.

establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.¹⁹
 The Afghan Ambassador in his letter had also attached a draft proposal for a treaty to be concluded between the two countries which incorporated provision for Ambassador level relations and increased economic cooperation between the two countries.²⁰
 Merrick forwarded Afghan Ambassador's letter along with the proposed draft treaty to the US State Department.²¹ The US Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg informed Merrick to convey to the Afghan Ambassador the appreciation of US Government's appreciation of friendly sentiments towards the United States and also enclosed a draft reply purported to be sent to Afghan Ambassador.²² The proposed note, a copy of which was handed over to Nadir Khan on 20 February 1926 in Paris, conveyed the appreciation of US Government towards Afghanistan's friendly sentiments and assured that "careful consideration will be accorded to the draft treaty which you have presented".²³ In 1927 and 1928, the exchange of communications between Kabul and Washington used to be through either French Ambassador in Kabul or through their respective missions in Paris.

In the wake of the downfall of King Amanullah in April 1929, the process of negotiations between Afghanistan and the

19 Nadir Khan to Merrick, 30 October 1925, *ibid.*, pp. 557-58.

20 *Ibid.*

21 Merrick to Secretary of State, 4 November 1925, *ibid.*, 1926, vol. I, p. 557.

22 Secretary of State to Merrick, 26 July 1926, *ibid.*, p. 559.

23 Draft Note from Ambassador Merrick to the Afghan Ambassador in France (no date), *ibid.*, p. 560.

United States suffered a setback.²⁴ Nadir Shah who succeeded Amanullah as the new King of Afghanistan could remain in power from the end of 1929 to 1933. During this period the Government of Afghanistan did make certain efforts to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. In 1931, the Afghan Ambassador in London made attempts to contact the US ambassador in London. Consequently, the US ambassador in London informed the Department of State and requested for further instructions.²⁵ However there was no positive response by the State Department to Afghan proposal. The Secretary of State directed the US ambassador in London that if Afghan ambassador raised the question of recognition "you should state that you are not authorized to discuss the matter with him".²⁶

The Department of State was informed in September 1931 by the US ambassador in Italy, Kirk, that the Afghan Government believed that the United States might be inclined to establish official relations with Afghanistan.²⁷ The Afghan ambassador in Rome had contacted ambassador Kirk there and conveyed to the latter his government's desire to "establish relations with the United States Government and was prepared to negotiate a treaty".²⁸ The Afghan ambassador had further informed that in case the US

24 Gregorian, n. 1, p. 266.

25 Dawes to the Secretary of State, 15 April 1931, n. 9, 1931, vol. I, p. 825.

26 Secretary of State to Dawes, 16 April 1931, *ibid.*, p. 825.

27 Kirk to Secretary of State, 19 September 1931, *ibid.*, pp. 825-26.

28 *Ibid.*

Government gave due weightage to the Afghan proposal, his government would undoubtedly empower him to undertake preliminary negotiations in Rome.²⁹ Thus the Department of State was requested by the US ambassador in Rome to issue instructions to the latter in this matter.³⁰

The US Secretary of State in his reply to ambassador Kirk wrote that the Afghan ambassador could be informed that "no recent consideration has been given to by his Government to the question of the establishment of official relations with the Afghan Government and the present moment is not considered to be opportune to negotiate a treaty".³¹ The US Department of State regarded the question of establishing official relations with Afghanistan at that time as premature "since the present regime in Afghanistan has not yet been recognized by this Government".³²

Consequent upon the death of King Nadir Shah, in 1933, Zahir Shah took over as the new King of Afghanistan. The new King adopted measures to improve Afghanistan's relations with Japan, Italy, France and Czechoslovakia and also made efforts to procure economic assistance from these countries.³³ In July 1934, King Zahir Shah sent a letter to the US President through Afghan ambassador in Paris expressing his desire to strengthen political

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p. 826.

31 Secretary of State to Kirk, 24 September 1931, *ibid.*, p. 826.

32 Ibid.

33 John C.L. Clare, "The West Eyes Afghanistan", *Asia* (London), vol. 38, no. 1, p. 747.

and economic relations between Afghanistan and the United States.³⁴ The then US Acting Secretary of State, William Phillips, wrote to the US President Roosevelt that although the US had never entered into direct diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, President Harding in 1921 received an official mission from that country by which it was generally accepted that "recognition had been accorded to the regime of King Amanullah who was then in power".³⁵ However the US reluctance to establish diplomatic relations with Afghanistan/ was evident from his statement: "We have been naturally conservative on the subject of establishing relations with Afghanistan owing to the primitive conditions in that country, the lack of capability or other guarantees to the safety of foreigners and the absence of any important American interest."³⁶ However the Acting Secretary of State further wrote that he could see no reasons "why we should withhold recognition of Afghanistan".³⁷ President Roosevelt in his reply sent to King Zahir Shah wrote: "I cordially reciprocate the sentiments which you express in extending recognition to Your Majesty's Government, take this opportunity of assuring you of my hope that friendly relations will always exist between the United States and Afghanistan."³⁸ Thus it was for the first time

34 Marriner to the Secretary of State, 30 June 1934, n. 9, 1934, vol. II, p. 747.

35 Acting Secretary of State to President, 21 August 1934, *ibid.*, p. 749.

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*

38 President Roosevelt to Zahir Shah, 21 August 1934, *ibid.*, p. 750.

that the United States accorded recognition to Afghanistan. A friendship treaty between Afghanistan and the United States was proposed by the former in October 1934.³⁹ The then US Secretary of State in his reply to US ambassador in France, Straus, wrote that although the United States was not opposed to "concluding a treaty of friendship and commerce with the Government of Afghanistan, it considers that the purpose which the two Governments have in mind might be accomplished more expeditiously and satisfactorily by the conclusion of a less formal agreement."⁴⁰

Subsequently a draft proposal envisaging proposed US amendments to the Afghan draft treaty was sent to Afghanistan. The proposed agreement consisting of seven articles envisaged political and economic relations between Washington and Kabul.⁴¹ The resultant impact of these negotiations was that on 26 March 1936, the agreement was signed between Kabul and Washington at Paris.⁴² Thus by March 1936, the United States had recognized the Afghan Government and both countries had signed a formal agreement. Accordingly on 4 May 1936, Hornybrock, presented his credentials to the Afghan Government at Kabul as the first US ambassador, in Afghanistan, with his headquarters at Tehran.⁴³

39 US Ambassador in France to Secretary of State, 13 October 1934. Ibid., 1935, vol. I, p. 555.

40 Secretary of State to Ambassador Straus in France, 2 January 1935, ibid., p. 556.

41 For full text of the draft agreement, see ibid., pp. 557-58.

42 Ambassador Straus to the Secretary of State, 26 March 1936, ibid., 1936, vol. III, p. 7.

43 New York Times, 6 May 1936.

The year 1937 marked the beginning of the economic cooperation between Kabul and Washington when Afghan Government granted its first concession to the American Inland Exploration Company a 75-year option on the exploration of the Ore resources available in Afghanistan. However, negotiations in this regard had started in October 1936 and on 20 November 1936⁴⁴ an agreement was signed between the representatives of the Inland Exploration Company and the Afghan Foreign Minister, Faiz Mohammad Khan.⁴⁵ Under the terms of this agreement, the US Company acquired the rights of exploring oil in Afghanistan and the agreement proved very useful for the Company.⁴⁶ Reports indicate that German Foreign Office and Berlin based Soviet Ambassador made frantic attempts for thwarting the conclusion of this agreement.⁴⁷ Realizing that their efforts in thwarting the conclusion of the said agreement could not succeed, the Soviets adopted other measures to exert pressure on Afghanistan. Consequently, Moscow laid claim over Afghan territory along the Afghan-Soviet border, which was refused by the then Afghan Government.⁴⁸

Such reports also emanated from Moscow. The acting US Ambassador in Moscow, in a letter to the Secretary of State,

44 US Ambassador in Germany's letter to the Secretary of State, 24 November 1936, n. 9, 1937, Part II, pp. 597-98.

45 American Economic Counsellor in Germany's letter to the Secretary of State, 30 November 1936, *ibid.*, pp. 598-99.

46 Memorandum by Raymond A. Hair of the Near-Eastern Affairs, 26 January 1937, *ibid.*, pp. 599-601.

47 US Economic Vice-Counsellor in Karachi to Secretary of State, 13 March 1937, *ibid.*, p. 602.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 603.

informed the latter that within a few days after the American Company had concluded oil exploration agreements with Iran and Afghanistan, the Afghan Ambassador in Moscow told the former that the Soviet officials were annoyed because of having not been consulted by Tehran and Kabul in connection with conclusion of such an important agreement.⁴⁹ The Soviet attitude might have been governed by the fact Moscow regarded Afghanistan under its sphere of influence and hence it disliked any third country to become its rival.⁵⁰

At the same time, Moscow also did not allow transition facilities to Afghanistan. There also did not exist any treaty or agreement between Kabul and Moscow in this regard. The Afghan Ambassador in Moscow is on record of having said that it would have been better if the Americans avoided using Soviet rail transport for supplying their material to Afghanistan, otherwise Moscow could exert undue pressure on Afghanistan.⁵¹ The Afghan Ambassador had further observed that Russia was not prepared to provide transition facilities through its territory because Moscow was trying to impose a trade agreement on Afghanistan which could have undermined Afghan interests.⁵² The US Company was also accorded the right to explore the mineral deposits subject to further negotiations. The Inland Exploration Company on its part

49 US Ambassador in Moscow to the Secretary of State, 3 December 1937, *ibid.*, p. 752.

50 Head of the Near Eastern Division to US Ambassador in Tehran, 24 December 1937, *ibid.*, p. 756.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 757.

52 *Ibid.*

agreed to pay £ 330,000 in the first years of the concession and 20 per cent of the concessions thereafter.⁵³ However within a year, the Inland Company surrendered its concessions pleading that the rich oil deposits of Afghanistan were virtually inaccessible and would require about £ 300 million to exploit them.⁵⁴ Even the global situation was not suitable for foreign investment in Afghanistan. By 1938, the possibilities of the outbreak of hostilities in Europe had become almost certain. The management of the Inland Company thought that in the event of war, oil fields in Afghanistan could be vulnerable to Soviet attack and thus their investment would be wasted.

The Inland Company's decision served a blow to Afghan policy of seeking support, services and investments from distant countries which were, it was hoped, politically disinterested in Afghan affairs. In the wake of US disinterestedness in large scale and long-term investments, Afghanistan became determined to disallow concessions to the Soviets and British nationals and rather thought of relying on German, Italian, Japanese and Czech investment and technicians.⁵⁵

Impact of Second World War

In the wake of the outbreak of Second World War, the Afghan economy was adversely affected because its exports of Karakul to the Western Europe had almost stopped. During 1940-41, out of

53 Islah, 3 May 1937.

54 Gregorian, n. 1, p. 381.

55 Vasudeo B. Mehta, "Changing Afghanistan", United Empire, November 1939, p. 1109.

2 hundred thousand hide-skins, Afghanistan could export only 38,940 skins to Germany and Soviet Union.⁵⁶ At this crucial juncture, the United States came to Afghanistan's rescue to help it export its Karakul in American markets.

By January 1941, the US had not established any diplomatic mission in Kabul. Murray, the Chief of State Department's Near Eastern Affairs Section, had observed that as long as the US interests continued to be slight, there was no possibility of the United States establishing diplomatic mission in Kabul.⁵⁷ It was only in December 1941 that the US initiated a move to establish a diplomatic mission and it was on 6 June 1942 that the US diplomatic mission was inaugurated in Kabul.⁵⁸ While addressing the Loya Jirgah on 15 June 1942, King Zahir Shah, welcomed the opening of US mission in Kabul and expressed the hope of better economic and political relations between Kabul and Washington.⁵⁹ On 25 July 1942, Cornelius H. Van Engert presented his credentials as US Ambassador in Kabul to King Zahir Shah. Ambassador Engert and King Zahir Shah exchanged views on mutual cooperation and world peace.⁶⁰

56 Government of Afghanistan, The Five-Year Economic Development Plan of Afghanistan (Kabul, 1956), p. 175.

57 Murray to US Ambassador in Tehran, 28 January 1941, n. 9, vol. III, pp. 255-58.

58 Thyges to the Secretary of State, 6 June 1942, *ibid.*, 1942, vol. IV, p. 50.

59 *Ibid.*, 17 June 1942, p. 5.

60 Engert to Secretary of State, 25 July 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

In August 1942, the Afghan Foreign Ministry urged the US Government to help it in exporting 900 bales of Karakul, 100 bales of Fur, 250 tonnes of Wool and 40 tonnes of Pistachiu, which were⁶¹ lying at the Karachi port to the American markets. The Afghan Government also expressed hope of similar US cooperation in future. The US ambassador in Kabul even suggested to station some US Air Force bombers in Kabul during the war period with a view to boost the morale of Afghan Government.⁶² However, the US Government⁶³ rejected this suggestion.

The US State Department had come out in December 1942 with a proposal of constructing a motorable road passing through India, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union to reach China with a view to supply material to China through road transport.⁶⁴ Consequently a US official, Gordon Bowles, reached India to explore the possibility of such a plan.⁶⁵ Following the Soviet refusal to allow any⁶⁶ American national on its territory even for survey purpose and Afghan reluctance to do so,⁶⁷ the US had to abandon such a plan.

61 Engert to the Secretary of State, 5 August 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

62 *Ibid.*, 7 August 1942, p. 54.

63 Secretary of State to Engert, 29 October 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

64 *Ibid.*, 9 December 1942, (1943), vol. 1, p. 614.

65 Secretary of State to US Representative in India (Phillips), 28 January 1943, *ibid.*, p. 618.

66 US Ambassador in Moscow to Secretary of State, 28 December 1942, *ibid.*, p. 616.

67 Phillips to Secretary of State, 16 January 1943, *ibid.*, p. 616.

As is well-known, the Afghan Government had declared to pursue policy of strict neutrality during the Second World War. In this regard, King Zahir Shah had issued a farman on 17 August 1940, proclaiming the continuance of the policy of neutrality.⁶⁸ During the war period, there had been no major breakthrough in political or economic relations between Afghanistan and the United States. In April 1944, John L. Savage, a US engineer, visited Afghanistan to help the latter in devising its irrigation plans.⁶⁹ In the beginning of 1945, the US envoy in Kabul, presented a memorandum to the Afghan Government urging the latter to bring the production of opium in that country under strict control for exclusive use in medicine and other scientific purposes. The Afghan Government, while acceding to American request, declared that it was going to ban the production of opium from 21 March 1945.⁷⁰

Thus during the period of Second World War, the relations between Afghanistan and the United States had become friendly and formal. During this period, the US diplomatic mission was established in Kabul. Afghanistan while promoting its diplomatic and economic relations with the United States, pursued a policy of strict neutrality during this period.

68 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan (New Jersey, 1973), p. 480.

69 Engert to Secretary of State, 27 May 1943, n. 64, pp. 54-63.

70 L.M. Goodrich and Mary J. Carole, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations, July 1944 - June 1945 (Princeton, 1947), vol. VII, pp. 695-99.

US-Afghan Relations After the Second World War

During the immediate postwar years, the era of good feelings lingered and Afghan leaders realized that "the United States would be the ideal substitute for receding British power, since distant. America was no imperialist threat to Afghanistan".⁷¹

In May 1946, the Afghan premier, Shah Mahmud Khan, had given gestures of cementing bonds of relations between Kabul and Washington. He said that he was "convinced that America's championship of the small nations guarantees my country's security against aggression. America's attitude is our salvation."⁷²

Even when the clouds of war had not completely faded in 1944, the US Ambassador in Kabul Cornelius Von H. Engert, had recommended to the State Department:

With a view to further consolidate our gains, it is essential to continue our present policy during the war period and subsequent period of reconstruction. I am little worried about the fact that during the immediate period preceding the war, the requirements of Afghanistan may not get due priority to U.S. foreign policy. Therefore I request the Department of State, Washington and the future policy makers to take into consideration the fact that Afghanistan, besides being an independent Muslim country, is also strategically important for the United States' policy in the Middle East. ⁷³

Immediately after the conclusion of the Second World War, the Afghan Government asked the United States to send American teachers and engineers. In 1946, an agreement was signed between the Afghan

71 Leon B. Poullada, "Afghanistan and the United States : The Crucial Years", Middle East Journal, vol. 35, Spring 1981, p. 181.

72 Islah, 9 May 1946.

73 Engert to Secretary of State, 11 November 1944. Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers 1944 (Washington, 1965), vol. V, p. 54.

Government and the Morrison-Knudsen Company of the United States worth \$ 17 million for repairing the dams and their reconstruction,⁷⁴ and the construction of 350 miles long highway. All these plans were to be implemented in the Helmand Valley region. The Helmand Valley project was so far the most ambitious project undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan. It was the multipurpose water and land development scheme for which initial surveys had been done⁷⁵ by the Japanese engineers in the 1930s.

By the end of 1948, the Afghan Government after having launched ambitious developmental projects, fell short of foreign exchange and thus required foreign assistance. Consequently, it turned to the United States. Accordingly, in 1949, Abdul Majid Zabuli, the Afghan Minister of National Economy, and a financial genius, visited Washington to negotiate loans for Afghan economic development plan. Zabuli asked for the loan worth \$ 118 million.⁷⁶ The US Department of State instead of acceding to his request, rather made him shuttle to the US Export-Import Bank (Exim Bank) "which completely failed to understand the quality and integrity of his plan and offered instead to finance the ongoing work of the Morrison-Knudsen Company in the Helmand Valley".⁷⁷

74 Peter G. Franck, Afghanistan Between East and West (Washington, 1960), p. 36.

75 Richard S. Newell, Politics of Afghanistan (Ithaca, 1971), p. 120.

76 Franck, n. 74, p. 38.

77 Leon B. Poullada, "The Failure of American Diplomacy in Afghanistan", World Affairs (Washington), vol. 145, no. 3, Winter 1982/83, p. 233.

As compared to original Afghan request for \$ 118 million,⁷⁸ the Exim Bank sanctioned only a loan of \$ 21 million. Even this loan was also sanctioned because of the Morrison-Knudsen Company's political influence.⁷⁹ Zabuli insisted that such unbalanced development would be a mistake and that the long payback of a multipurpose reclamation project like the Helmand would cause serious problems for Afghanistan. So he recommended to his Government to decline the loan, "but his Afghan superiors overruled him because they wanted to establish close economic relations with the United States for political reasons".⁸⁰

Zabuli had also requested the United States to provide American weapons so that Afghanistan could modernize its armed forces in the wake of possible Soviet danger. He said:

... Properly armed, and convinced of US backing, Afghanistan could manage a delaying action in the passes of the Hindu-Kush which would be a contribution to the success of the armed forces of the West and might enable them to utilize bases which Pakistan and India might provide ... When war came Afghanistan would, of course, be overrun and occupied. But the Russians would be unable to pacify the country. Afghanistan could and would pursue guerrilla tactics for an indefinite period. ⁸¹

However, Zabuli's request for US arms assistance was rejected. Even the Afghan Government seemed to have not taken a serious view of Zabuli's requests and US offers and rejections. Kabul

78 Franck, n. 74, p. 39.

79 Poullada, n. 71, p. 182.

80 Poullada, n. 77, p. 233.

81 US, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948,
Vol. 5, Part I (Washington, 1975), pp. 491-93.

rather accepted the meagre loan offered by the United States. Even Afghan Prime Minister, Shah Mahmud had observed in a conversation with the US President, Truman: "The Afghan Government tends to think of the loan as of political as well as of economic importance, possibly increasingly so in the light of manifestations⁸² of Soviet interest and offers of assistance to Afghanistan." Repeated requests for weapons were put off, even though in 1949 Afghan officials suggested that "unless US gave Afghanistan⁸³ more assistance, Afghans might turn to USSR".

Actually, Afghanistan had made requests for US arms assistance as far back as in 1944.⁸⁴ Since then the repeated Afghan requests for American arms had been ignored by the United States. According to Leon. B. Poullada: "Afghan overtures to America were met at first with bureaucratic and legalistic evasions and finally with a clear negative response. True, the Afghan approaches were often naive and awkward, but sophistication on the tortuous ways of American policy making could hardly be expected".⁸⁵ The US Embassy in Kabul recommended arms sales on 4 January 1950 "to exclude Soviet influence, cement Afghan-American friendship, maintain internal security and promote settlement of differences with Pakistan".⁸⁶ However, in Washington the policy

82 Cited in Poullada, n. 77, p. 233.

83 The Economist (London), 2 August 1980, p. 4.

84 Poullada, n. 71, p. 186.

85 Ibid.

86 Airgram No. A-2, 4 January 1950 from Embassy Kabul to Department of State, cited in *ibid.*

makers were underscoring the strategic significance of Afghanistan. As is revealed from an assessment made by the US National Security Council in early 1951:

The Kremlin apparently does not consider Afghanistan's relatively meagre assets to be worthy of attention and probably believes that it can take Afghanistan easily whenever its broader objectives would be served. There is little doubt that Afghanistan could be conquered regardless of its will to resist. In the event of an invasion, it is possible that certain elements - particularly the Afghan (Pathan) tribesmen, would continue to resist.⁸⁷

However, the then US Assistant Secretary of State, George McGhee, visited Kabul on 12 March 1951 and discussed the Afghan defence requirements with Sardar Mohammad Daud, then Minister of War. George McGhee suggested a formal request by diplomatic note with a detailed list of desired equipment attached and assured Daud that it would receive "sympathetic consideration".⁸⁸ Poullada claims⁸⁹ that Daud understood it to mean that approval was assured. The Afghan Government had never made a formal official request unless it was assured beforehand that it would be approved.

The Afghan Prime Minister, Shah Mahmud, during his visit to the United States in April 1951 took the matter with US President, Truman. However even prior to the visit of Afghan premier, the US Department of State in a note to the President on 21 February 1951 had observed: "Afghanistan continues to maintain toward the USSR an attitude of cautious correctness combined with firm resistance to Soviet efforts at penetration... So far, Soviet pressure has not

87 Index of Declassified Documents (Arlington, Virginia, 1978), No. 377A.

88 Ibid.

89 Poullada, n. 71, p. 186.

been severe nor has the Soviet influence in Afghan territory contiguous to the Soviet Central Asian Republic [sic] been extensive".⁹⁰ The State Department further advised the US President that the Afghan requests for arms were being ignored rather than refused. President Truman was further advised to tell the Afghan Prime Minister of "the limitations of the ability of the US to furnish military assistance" to stress reliance on collective security within the United Nations, and to hold out hope for more financial and technical aid".⁹¹ But the Afghan Government still insisted on procuring arms from the United States and by August 1951, a formal request with arms list was presented to the United States. On 27 November 1951, the US Government instructed its Ambassador in Kabul to tell the Afghan Government that "the arms requested will cost \$ 25 million. They will have to be paid in cash. Transit through Pakistan will have to be arranged with no help from the United States. The sale will have to be made public, and it would help if the Pushtunistan claim is dropped."⁹² It appeared that the US was ready to supply arms to Afghanistan on cash payment and simultaneously it expected Afghanistan to strike a deal on Pushtunistan, a step which no Afghan Government could ever undertake. Thus there was a clear indication that US was reluctant to supply arms to Afghanistan. And the issue was shelved for the time being by both sides.

⁹⁰ US, Foreign Relations of the United States 1951, Vol. VI, Part 2 (Washington, 1977), pp. 2005-10.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 1965.

⁹² US, National Archives, File No. 890, 20/7-2048 as cited in Poullada, n. 71, pp. 186-87.

Until the beginning of 1952, the United States had been taking the growing Soviet influence in Afghanistan very lightly. But it was compelled to revise its assessment. On 9 September 1952 the US Charge d'Affaires in Afghanistan Horner in a despatch to the Department of State wrote: "Over past year Embassy [US] has reported evidences increasing Soviet interest in Afghanistan... It may suffice to say that we have felt earlier estimates of relative Soviet non-interest in this country to be in need of radical revision."⁹³ On 9 September 1952, the then Afghan Foreign Minister, Ali Mohammed Khan, in a conversation with Philip Beck and Louis de Laive, two members of the United Nations (UN) technical assistance mission, confirmed that the Soviet Charge d'Affaires in Kabul, Shpedko, had delivered a stiff aide memoire to the Afghan Government on 7 August 1952, which inter-alia noted that Soviet Union would regard Afghan plan for oil drilling in northern part by a French firm under UN auspices "to be unfriendly act and specific violation of the non-aggression treaty of 1931".⁹⁴ During the first week of September the Soviet Foreign Minister Vishinsky had called the Afghan Ambassador in Moscow, Sultan Ahmad, and warned him orally "in a severe tongue lashing".⁹⁵ However on 8 September 1952, the Afghan Government in a written reply handed over to the Soviet Charge d'Affaires in Kabul asserted that the proposed oil exploration "was purely an internal matter"⁹⁶ of

93 US, "The Charge in Afghanistan (Horner) to the Department of State", 9 September 1952, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, Vol. XI (Washington, 1983), p. 1447.

94 Ibid.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

Afghanistan. The Afghan Foreign Minister regarded the Soviet démarche regarding oil as having broader implications.

The US Ambassador in Kabul further noted that any US advice to Kabul in that regard depended upon evaluation of overall Soviet intentions and he solicited the views of the Department of State on the matter.⁹⁷ In his view it was difficult to imagine that Soviet Union would take any overt steps against Afghanistan at that particular juncture. The Afghan Government seemed to be disturbed over the Soviet démarche. The First Under Secretary in Afghan Foreign Ministry, Abdul Hamid Khan Aziz, told the US Ambassador in Kabul on 9 September 1952: "Afghanistan considered US her really true friend and counts on US [USA] to help Afghanistan take her place among free and democratic nations of the world."⁹⁸

The US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson did not feel that the Soviet démarche was precursor of any immediate Soviet threat to Afghanistan.⁹⁹ He regarded the Soviet démarche as the first step in Soviet campaign to prevent the entry of Westerners in north of Hindu Kush "in line with long standing Soviet policy and an endeavour to prevent economic improvement amongst peoples who are potentially exploitable by the Soviets on ethnic grounds".¹⁰⁰

In middle of September 1952, the Afghan Government announced its plan to construct modern roads in the north Afghanistan. The

97 Ibid., p. 1448.

98 Horner to Department of State, 9 September 1952, *ibid.*, p. 1450.

99 The Secretary of State to Embassy in Afghanistan, 12 September 1952, *ibid.*, p. 1450.

100 Ibid., pp. 1450-51.

US Ambassador in Kabul recommended to the Department of State to provide \$ 1 million worth of economic assistance to Afghanistan in this regard.¹⁰¹ In its view, the granting of such assistance would: /

- (i) strengthen Afghan will to resist Soviet presence;
- (ii) provide additional incentive towards development of north;
- (iii) provide effective means for overall economic strengthening of Afghanistan;
- (iv) reduce the possibility of the success of Soviet economic pressure on North Afghanistan;
- (v) increase Afghan potentiality to combat subversion and subversive rebellion in north;
- (vi)
- (vii) 102

Strangely enough the US Department of State instead of considering seriously the recommendations of its Ambassador in Kabul, rather noted that Afghanistan, aside from a desire for friendly advice from the United Kingdom and the US, "may well be capitalizing on demarche in attempt to achieve (i) increased economic assistance; (ii) military assistance; and (iii) US-UK pressure on Pakistan to negotiate Pushtunistan agreement with Afghanistan."¹⁰³ It further noted that the Soviet demarche when considered in historical perspective, did not pose any threat to Afghanistan.

101 Horner to the Department of State, 23 September 1952, *ibid.*, p. 1453.

102 *Ibid.*, pp. 1453-54. The clauses vi and vii are deleted in the original.

103 Secretary of State to the Embassy in Afghanistan, 29 September 1952. *Ibid.*, p. 1454.

However Ambassador Horner while expressing his doubts over the instructions of the Department of State asserted that "no account seems to have been taken of Afghan psychology or existence of important elements here willing to come to terms with the Soviets".¹⁰⁴ He further informed the State Department that the Afghan cabinet was coming around to view that "accommodation with Soviets must be sought at almost any cost".¹⁰⁵ Thus Ambassador recommended that "we should not promptly and positively and not wait until enemy [Soviet Union] is already within gates".¹⁰⁶

The available evidence shows that Washington did not take Soviet demarche to Afghanistan seriously and only expressed its moral support in that regard. It also expressed its inability to provide increased economic assistance to Afghanistan.¹⁰⁷ Besides, in the wake of these developments, the US did not apprehend any danger of Afghanistan's falling "into Soviet camp".¹⁰⁸

Since 1951, the United States had been involved in establishing a military alliance in the Middle East to strengthen

104 Horner to the Department of State, 2 October 1952. Ibid., p. 1456.

105 Ibid.

106 Ibid.

107 The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Afghanistan, 11 October 1952. Ibid., p. 1462.

108 Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State For Near Eastern, South Asia and African Affairs (Byroade) to the Under Secretary of State (Bruce), 10 October 1952, ibid., p. 1460.

its position. The news reports that Pakistan would join the proposed US defence alliance created worry and anxiety in Afghanistan. The proposed alliance was named as Middle East Defence Organization (MEDO). The Secretary of State informed the US Embassy in Afghanistan that the MEDO was conceived to be military planning organization only, not involving formal alliances or commitments. He further added that when the organization was established "perhaps it would invite other nations of general area for example, Afghanistan or Pakistan, if they are then interested".¹⁰⁹ However the Department of State wondered whether Afghanistan would join MEDO in view of its geographic proximity to the Soviet Union and Article 2 of the Afghan-Soviet treaty of June 1931.¹¹⁰

The year 1953 marked a change of leadership in Afghanistan when on 6 September 1953, Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan took over as Prime Minister of Afghanistan. In the United States, John Foster Dulles had taken over as the Secretary of State. Dulles provided a new impetus to American cold war policies by establishing defence alliances with active US support and involving countries having geographic proximity to the Soviet Union and People's Republic of China. By 1953, Pakistan had started receiving massive economic and military aid from the United States which was bound to create an alarm for Afghanistan which had strained relations with Pakistan over the issue of Pushtunistan. However

109 Secretary of State to the Embassy in Afghanistan, 20 February 1953. Ibid., p. 1465.

110 Ibid.

the United States still ignored the strategic significance of Afghanistan. It is evident from a secret study conducted in 1953 by Joint Chiefs of Staff which inter-alia concluded:

Afghanistan is of little or no strategic importance to the United States. Its geographic location coupled with the realization by Afghan leaders of Soviet capabilities, presages Soviet control of the country whenever the situation so dictates. It would be desirable for Afghanistan to remain neutral because otherwise it might be overrun as an avenue to the Indian subcontinent. Such neutrality will remain a stronger possibility if there is no western-sponsored opposition to communism in Afghanistan, which opposition in itself might precipitate Soviet moves to take control of the country. 111

In December 1953, the then US Vice-President, Richard Nixon visited Northern-tier countries including Afghanistan. During his tour to Afghanistan, Nixon tried to impress upon the Afghan ruling elite the need for forging an alliance between Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. He gave the impression as if he disliked the non-aligned policy of Afghanistan and regarded the prevailing controversy between Afghanistan and Pakistan as of less importance.¹¹² He however, assured Afghanistan of continued US help for Helmand Valley project but no assurance was given regarding the military assistance.¹¹³

The supply of US military assistance to Pakistan in 1953-54 evoked general concern in Afghanistan. The Afghan Ambassador in

111 Index of Declassified Documents (Arlington, Virginia, 1979), no. 33A.

112 For details see, Department of State Bulletin (Washington), 15 June 1953.

113 Louis Dupree, "The Mountains go to Mohammed Zaheer", American University Field Staff Reports (hereafter AUFSR) (New York), vol. 4, no. 6, June 1960, p. 3.

Washington met the US Secretary of State in early January 1954 and urged the latter to maintain economic and military balance in the region.¹¹⁴ While explaining his country's reaction over US military assistance to Pakistan, the Afghan Ambassador further expressed the hope that his government expected the US to maintain existing military balance in the region.

In early 1954, the military cooperation pacts were signed between Pakistan and Turkey and Pakistan and United States. The Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement was signed between Pakistan and the United States at Karachi on 19 May 1954.¹¹⁵ In the wake of these developments, the belief was growing in the Afghan Governmental circles that "the US has turned its back to Afghanistan".¹¹⁶ The US Ambassador in Afghanistan, Ward, expressed the view that the Soviet Union had been taking moves to strengthen its ties with Kabul through trade on terms very favourable to the Afghans and through credits for economic development accompanied by technical assistance.¹¹⁷ He further asserted that should Soviet efforts be intensified and in the absence of any effective counter move by the United States, "We can expect the Soviets to establish effective control in the trans-Hindu Kush area of

114 New York Times, 6 January 1954.

115 For text of the Agreement, see US, United States Treaties and Other International Agreements (Washington, 1958), vol. 5, p. 1954.

116 Memorandum to the Deputy Director, Office of South Asian Affairs (Smith) to Donald D. Kennedy of the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, 23 June 1954, n. 93, p. 1474.

117 Ibid.

Afghanistan within the foreseeable future".¹¹⁸ Thus he emphasized that there should be an appraisal by the appropriate US military authorities of the importance of Afghanistan, both direct and indirect, for the United States. Ward recommended the supply of US military assistance to Afghanistan in the context of a regional arrangement - an association with Turkey or Pakistan or both in arrangements similar to those existing between Pakistan and Turkey.¹¹⁹ He also suggested to the Department of State: "We should be forth right in making clear to Afghanistan that we can make no commitments beyond the language of the mutual defence assistance agreement. We cannot guarantee Afghanistan's borders".¹²⁰ He also cautioned not to overlook the fact that the Soviet Union might react to US move of providing arms assistance to Afghanistan and asserted that "this possibility exists whether or not we extend military assistance to Afghanistan".¹²¹

The United States also seemed to be worried about the growing Soviet economic penetration into Afghanistan. A note prepared by the US Department of State in June 1954 entitled "United States and Soviet Interests in Afghanistan", noted that the dangers of the increased Soviet activity in Afghanistan included the military aspects of road and oil storage construction and the subversive activity by Soviet "technicians" who were of

118 Ibid., p. 1475.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid.

121 Ibid.

the same racial stock as the Afghans.¹²² The note called for a review of US economic policy in Afghanistan to counter the mounting Soviet influence. It inter-alia suggested the three following alternatives:

- (i) Keeping our present policy without significant increases or decreases in our aid;
- (ii) minimize our losses by gradually reducing our activity and our aid to a minimum consistent with achievement of bare economic results; and
- (iii) countering the Soviet moves so as to preclude infiltration by Soviet technicians or mitigate their effectiveness. ¹²³

However with regard to the third alternative, the note envisaged that it might be expensive as it would probably be possible only upon US acceptance of likely Afghan requests for substantial additional US economic aid and US military aid on certain guarantees.¹²⁴

The Afghan Ambassador in Washington met the US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs on 27 July 1954 and expressed his Government's willingness to consider US military assistance on a bilateral basis without reference to a regional organization, with the avowed objective of bolstering its internal strength and of improving its capacity to resist aggression from whatever direction it should come.¹²⁵

122 Memorandum by the Officer in Charge of Economic Affairs, Office of South Asian Affairs (Flucker) to the Deputy Director of that Office, 25 June 1954, *ibid.*, p. 1476.

123 *Ibid.*, p. 1477.

124 *Ibid.*

125 Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Byroade) to the Secretary of State, 27 July 1954, *ibid.*, p. 1479.

Byroade while accepting that the Middle East being a vulnerable area was threatened by increasing Soviet interest, added that the conclusion of a US-Afghan military aid programme might provide a very strong Soviet reaction thus undermining the interests of both the countries.¹²⁶ The Afghan Ambassador also met the US Secretary of State on 27 July 1954 and told the latter that the United States had not yet taken any decision on Afghan request for American arms.¹²⁷ The Secretary of State told the Afghan Ambassador that his country should proceed slowly in the matter "... [and] some of the more immediate imponderables in considering military aid for Afghanistan were the nature of the aid programme for the coming year, the character of our current commitments and future contingencies...."¹²⁸

In October 1954, the National Intelligence Estimates Committee, an inter-departmental wing of the National Security Council (NSC) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) prepared a report entitled "Outlook for Afghanistan".¹²⁹ The report noted that the growing Afghan reliance on Soviet Union for trade and loans with technical assistance made it highly vulnerable to Soviet pressures.¹³⁰ Afghanistan's participation in a Western-backed defence arrangement or its acceptance of substantial

126 Ibid.

127 Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Officer in Charge of Pakistan-Afghanistan Affairs, 27 July 1954, *ibid.*, p. 1480.

128 Ibid.

129 For details see, *ibid.*, pp. 1481-97.

130 Ibid., p. 1482.

Western military aid was bound to evoke adverse Soviet reaction. It was further observed that the USSR could easily take over Afghanistan if it chose to do so, but openly aggressive action against Afghanistan would "almost certainly entail anti-Soviet reactions elsewhere, particularly in the Arab-Asian bloc which the USSR would wish to avoid".¹³¹ However the report expressed the hope that the Afghan Government was likely to continue with its fundamental policy of attempting to play off the great powers to Afghanistan's advantage, meanwhile continuing its association with the Arab-Asian bloc in the United Nations.¹³² However the report also noted the future policy which Afghanistan might pursue:

Afghan leaders will attempt to obtain additional Western economic aid to counterbalance that received from the USSR and will probably display continuing interest in the idea of participating in Western-backed military aid programmes. However, it is unlikely that the Afghans would actually accept membership in a Western backed area defence arrangement since they almost certainly realize that no foreseeable arrangement could furnish them sufficiently realistic protection against Soviet attack to compensate for the increased Soviet hostility toward them which would almost certainly ensue. ¹³³

In October 1954, the Afghan Foreign Minister, Sardar Mohammed Naim met the US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles and pleaded for the supply of US arms to Afghanistan. However Dulles replied: "After careful consideration, extending military aid to Afghanistan would create problems not offset by the

¹³¹ Ibid., pp. 1482-83.

¹³² Ibid., p. 1483.

¹³³ Ibid.

strength it would generate. Instead of asking for arms, Afghanistan should settle the Pushtunistan dispute with Pakistan.¹³⁴ Thus by the end of 1954, it had become evident that the United States was reluctant to provide arms assistance to Afghanistan. Leon B. Poullada has observed that "American failure between 1942 and 1954 to respond to the genuine economic and security needs of a friendly and pro-Western Afghan government, and to understand the political imperatives behind the Pushtunistan problem, set the stage for the stunning success of Soviet diplomacy."¹³⁵

On 16 December 1954, the US Acting Secretary of State emphatically said that the United States would not, for present, extend military aid to Afghanistan. However it could consider doing so upon "attainment of improved Afghan relations with Pakistan and Iran".¹³⁶

The increased US economic and arms assistance to Pakistan but rejection of Afghan proposal for the supply of arms by the United States had perturbed the policy-makers in Kabul. Consequently "in January 1955, Daud approached the USSR regarding long standing Soviet offers of military aid which Afghanistan had previously rejected".¹³⁷ However the visit of top Soviet leaders to Burma, India and Afghanistan in the later period of 1955 which

134 Cited in Poullada, n. 77, p. 235.

135 Ibid.

136 The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Afghanistan, 16 December 1954, n. 92, p. 1497.

137 Poullada, n. 77, p. 235.

envisaged promise of increased Soviet help for Afghanistan, perhaps prompted Washington to review its policy towards the region especially Afghanistan. The New York Times had opined that Moscow had challenged the US policy towards Afghanistan.¹³⁸

The aftermath of these developments was the emergence of three schools of opinion in Washington regarding US policy towards Afghanistan. One school was of the view that the US should counter the Soviet influence in Afghanistan. The second school of thought favoured Afghanistan to be left to its own fate and in case it tilted towards Moscow, it would be a warning to other nonaligned countries.¹³⁹ The third school of opinion espoused for the continuance of incremental help to Afghanistan. Hamilton F. Armstrong, the editor of prestigious quarterly Foreign Affairs, while supporting this view wrote in an article: "It would seem to indicate the right position for us to take realistically and morally as well, but only in the conditions and up to the point."¹⁴⁰ He further expressed the view that the conditions were such that "the Afghans, who sincerely want to protect themselves from domination from any quarter, shall be intelligent and farsighted in their steps to avoid dangers of crisis".¹⁴¹ The author strongly pleaded for the supply of US arms to Afghanistan:

138 New York Times, 22 December 1955.

139 "The Russian Moves in Afghanistan", The Reporter (New York), 5 April 1956.

140 Hamilton F. Armstrong, "North of the Khyber", Foreign Affairs (New York), vol. 34, no. 4, p. 619.

141 Ibid.

... Afghans are tough and resilient lot and it is possible that even the subtle programme on which the Soviet Union seems to be embarked for disarming them economically and financially will fail. Nothing that we can do can guarantee that result. But we can encourage the Afghan leaders to feel that they are not alone, we can continue our aid in moderate amounts, giving them time to get their bearing; we can perhaps be of service to them politically, and we can warn against further steps which will end almost automatically in delivering their country to foreign hands even if seeing that result as imminent they belatedly revolt against it. 142

The augmentation of Soviet economic and military aid to Afghanistan had unnerved the US policy makers for a while. Recognizing this fact, the US Secretary of State, Dulles, said that the success of Soviet aid and resultant increase in its influence was discernible from the pace of developmental programmes being carried out in Kabul.¹⁴³ Report indicated that when Soviet leaders were in Kabul in December 1955, President Eisenhower wrote a letter to King Zahir Shah expressing concern over deteriorating relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹⁴⁴ The contents of this letter were never made public. Dulles also said: "I cannot disclose the contents of the correspondence ... both sides have not published it."¹⁴⁵

In view of the growing Soviet influence in Afghanistan, the failure of US policy to abate it had been subject to criticism at

142 Ibid., p. 618.

143 US, House, 84th Congress, Second Session, Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriation, Hearings on Mutual Security, Appropriation for 1957 (Washington, 1957), p. 35.

144 New York Times, 19 December 1955.

145 Department of State Bulletin (Washington), 2 January 1956.

home. Lesley E. Crane, an American engineer, who had worked in Afghanistan, said in an interview with the US News and World Report that the United States had spent millions of dollars in Afghanistan without gaining any advantage.¹⁴⁶ There were some who favoured a positive attitude towards Afghanistan. Adam C. Powell told the House of Representatives that by remaining neutral during the two world wars, Afghanistan had earned admiration of world community which was evident from the fact that Kabul's admission to the United Nations was done unopposed in 1946.¹⁴⁷ The official circles in Washington also acknowledged that Soviet package-aid deals had great impact on the developing countries of South Asia especially Afghanistan, but at the same time they expressed the view that Washington had not lost its interest in Afghanistan.¹⁴⁸

The United States provided air-travel facilities to over 1000 Afghans for Haj pilgrimage in June 1956.¹⁴⁹ During this period Afghanistan was hit by food shortage and it urged the US to supply foodgrains to meet the shortage.¹⁵⁰ The International Cooperation Administration of the United States declared on 17 November 1956 that Afghan Government had accepted the aid worth \$ 100,000 for the reconstruction of a part of Habibia College and the Department of State Bulletin called it an expression of US friendship towards the

146 US News and World Report (Washington), 16 April 1956.

147 Congressional Record, House 84th Congress, Second Session (Washington, 1956), vol. 102, Part II, pp. 8976-77.

148 Department of State Bulletin, 28 May 1956.

149 Ibid., 2 July 1956.

150 New York Times, 23 August 1956.

people of Afghanistan.¹⁵¹ William M. Routry, a senior official of the Department of State told the Committee on Foreign Relations that the US investments in Afghanistan in 1956 were to the tune of \$ 15.6 million.¹⁵² In 1957, the United States agreed to provide Afghanistan technical aid worth \$ 3 million and \$ 11.4 million for development purposes.¹⁵³ The International Cooperation Administration in cooperation with the Department of State prepared a report which analysed the impact of US assistance on Afghanistan. The report noted that the US aid proved instrumental in saving Afghanistan from being pushed into the Soviet camp.¹⁵⁴

The pattern of Afghan-US trade had remained always uneven. In 1957, the Afghan US trade was worth 994.66 million Afghanis. However during 1956-57, the Afghan imports from the United States accounted for only 3.4 per cent of former's total imports.¹⁵⁵ Afghan exports to that country during the same period accounted for 21.3 per cent.¹⁵⁶

Afghanistan and Eisenhower Doctrine

The US President Dwight D. Eisenhower in a message to the US Congress on 5 January 1957 said that the countries of the Middle

151 Department of State Bulletin, 3 December 1956.

152 US House, 85th Congress, First Session, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hearings on Mutual Security Act 1957 (Washington, 1957), Part I, p. 794.

153 Ibid. Also see Department of State Bulletin, 9 April 1957.

154 Ibid., p. 615.

155 Government of Afghanistan, Afghanistan: Survey of Progress 1960 (Kabul, 1960), p. 209.

156 Ibid., p. 205.

East were facing the threat of communism. He further added that the United States in pursuance of its policy of global containment of communism, wanted to provide increased economic and military assistance to the countries of the Middle East with a view to stem the tide of Soviet communism. This message later came to be known as "Eisenhower Doctrine".¹⁵⁷ James P. Richards, a senior officer of the Department of State, visited Afghanistan in early 1957 as part of his tour to the Middle Eastern and South Asian countries, to explain the purpose of the Eisenhower Doctrine and its importance in safeguarding the independence of these countries.¹⁵⁸ Richards tried to convince the Afghan rulers the benefits of joining the US sponsored alliances under the Eisenhower Doctrine. However, Richard's mission was not in keeping with the wellknown Afghan policy of traditional neutrality. Afghan acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine meant renouncing its centuries old and time-tested policy of neutrality which Kabul could not afford.

Prime Minister Dauod's Visit to US

The Afghan Prime Minister, Sardar Mohammad Dauod Khan paid a fortnight's visit to the United States starting from 24 June 1958. He was given a warm welcome on his arrival. In his reply to the warm welcome at the airport, Sardar Dauod hoped that his visit would be helpful in further strengthening the relations between two countries.¹⁵⁹ The officials of the State Department were

157 For details see, Department of State Bulletin, 21 January 1957.

158 The United States in World Affairs 1957 (New York, 1958), p. 181.

159 Department of State Bulletin, 21 July 1958.

quoted as having praised the Afghan policy of neutrality.¹⁶⁰

The discussions between the Afghan Prime Minister and the US leaders were marked by cordiality and genuine friendship, which characterized Afghan-US relations.¹⁶¹ The US President explained the objectives of US policy in the field of international affairs and Prime Minister Daud similarly described the attitude of his government in the field of international affairs including its traditional policy of neutrality and independence.¹⁶² Afghanistan was assured of the continuing readiness of the United States to be of assistance to Afghanistan in its high objectives of developing the resources of the country for the welfare of the people. It was further agreed that cooperation which already existed in the development of Afghan civil aviation, the Helmand Valley, surface transportation projects and the Afghan educational system, would be continued with a view to making each of these projects as efficient and effective as circumstances would allow.¹⁶³ On 26 June 1958, a cultural agreement was signed between the two countries as a symbol of warm relations and as an indication of a desire of the two nations to base their relations on mutual understanding.¹⁶⁴ Both the sides expressed their desire to maintain and strengthen the cordial understanding between the

¹⁶⁰ New York Times, 25 June 1958.

¹⁶¹ Department of State Bulletin, 21 July 1958.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

two countries.¹⁶⁵ Thus the visit of Sardar Mohammad Daud to the United States proved successful and a milestone in the Afghan-US relations.

President Eisenhower's Visit to Afghanistan

In December 1959, US President, Eisenhower visited Afghanistan. The news of the visit of the US President was given due publicity in the Afghan media. Anis and Islah wrote that President Eisenhower was a great world statesman and President of a great nation who was due to visit Afghanistan.¹⁶⁶ Anis expressed the view that the proposed visit of President Eisenhower was significant on two counts. Firstly, because the countries of the region had differences on political and regional issues and secondly, the visit would help in ascertaining the US viewpoint on significant issues.¹⁶⁷ The paper further noted that the US President's visit to neutral Afghanistan was more significant because it was not a member of any US sponsored military alliance.¹⁶⁸

The visit of President Eisenhower to Afghanistan was very short - just for five hours. President Eisenhower reached Kabul on 9 December 1959. Welcoming the US President, the Afghan King Zahir Shah hoped that the visit would help in strengthening the relations between the two countries.¹⁶⁹ President Eisenhower, while praising the valiant Afghans, hoped that his brief visit

165 Ibid.

166 Cited in Dupree, n. 113 , pp. 6-7.

167 Ibid., p. 7.

168 Ibid.

169 New York Times, 10 December 1959.

would help in understanding the great country of Afghanistan.¹⁷⁰
 The United States provided financial and technical assistance to develop Kandhar International Airport as a major refueling point for flights across southern Asia. The United States provided \$ 10 million in grants and \$ 5 million in loans for Morrison and Knudsen to build the airport. Prior to the airport could be opened in December 1962, modern jets had come into use¹⁷¹ and were speeding across the area without need to refuel.

Afghan King Zahir Shah's Visit to US

The Afghan King, Zahir Shah paid an official visit to the United States from 4 to 16 September 1963. During the course of his visit, the Afghan King had an exchange of views with US President, John F. Kennedy, on matters of mutual interest to Afghanistan and the United States and the contemporary world situation.¹⁷² The joint communique issued after Afghan King's visit to the US, noted that the US had followed with interest and sympathy the efforts being made by Afghanistan under the leadership of King Zahir Shah, to achieve economic development and social progress.¹⁷³ President Kennedy assured the visiting Afghan King of the "continuing desire of the US to cooperate with Afghanistan in economic and technical fields by so doing to contribute to the success of the efforts which Afghanistan is making to provide a

170 Ibid.

171 Henry S. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (Durham, N.C. : Duke Press, 1983), p. 29.

172 Department of State Bulletin, 7 October 1963.

173 Ibid.

better life for its people."¹⁷⁴ The joint communique further noted that in the sphere of international relations both the countries were dedicated to the furtherance of the cause of world peace and to bring about the elimination of reduction of tensions between nations. Both countries expressed their deep conviction of the indispensable role of the United Nations in advancing the cause of peace and of the necessity of supporting its efforts directed to that end.¹⁷⁵ It also noted that "Afghanistan's traditional policy is the safeguarding of its national independence through non-alignment, friendship and cooperation with all countries. The US for its part places great importance on Afghanistan's continued independence and national integrity."¹⁷⁶ Both Washington and Kabul agreed that the visit of Afghan King had contributed to better understanding between the two countries. /

Prime Minister Mainwadal's Visit
to the US March 1967

Mohammad Hashim Mainwadal, the Prime Minister of Afghanistan, visited the US from 25 March to 9 April 1967. He stayed in Washington from 28-30 March 1967 and held talks with the US President Lyndon B. Johnson and other US officials. The US President in his welcome speech on 28 March 1967 said: "... Afghanistan is far from us in miles and hours as we meet this morning.¹⁷⁷ But for us it is no longer a distant, far off remote place." The US President listed the following four commonalities between the two countries:

174 Ibid.

175 Ibid.

176 Ibid.

177 Ibid., 17 April 1967, p. 627.

- (i) Your land, like ours has a strong tradition of freedom and independence;
- (ii) your people, like ours, cherish diversity, while they seek unity in mutual respect and justice;
- (iii) you, like us, are experimental in the art of government and social reform;
- (iv) and we share in common dedication to peace and to the idea of a world community based on freedom. 178

President Johnson further added that the relations between Kabul and Washington had been close and cordial: "Today they are warmer than ever before. It is a very great honour and privilege to have you with us to discuss an even more productive future." 179

The visiting Afghan Prime Minister in his reply thanked the US President for latter's "kind expressions of friendship toward Afghanistan". 180 The Afghan Prime Minister further said that despite the considerable geographic distance separating us and Afghanistan, "our common belief and devotion to liberty and respect for the inherent dignity of man has bridged this distance". 181 The Afghan Prime Minister expressed his confidence that his visit would serve to strengthen and promote the friendly and cultural relations which so happily had prevailed between Afghanistan and the US. He also appreciated the role of US assistance in the development of Afghan economy. The Afghan Prime Minister said: "Afghanistan follows a policy of active nonalignment and is

178 Ibid.

179 Ibid.

180 Ibid.

181 Ibid., p. 628.

determined to exercise the free judgement in international affairs. It endeavours wherever possible to serve the cause of international peace and the rights of nations and peoples in the firm belief that only in peace can the progress of all nations, including Afghanistan, be assured and that international understanding is the best way of insuring human prosperity throughout the world."¹⁸²

The joint statement issued on 28 March 1967 noted that the two leaders talked about current developments elsewhere in Asia, particularly the urgent need for peace and stability in South-East Asia.¹⁸³ They outlined their respective positions on the problems of Vietnam and agreed that a peaceful and just settlement is urgently needed.¹⁸⁴

The United States and Afghanistan concluded an agreement on 19 July 1967 for the sales of agricultural commodities under title of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954.¹⁸⁵ On 25 May 1969, the US Secretary of State, William Rogers, had a brief stopover in Kabul, on his way to Paris to attend the Sixteenth Plenary Session on Vietnam. In his statement issued on 9 May 1969 prior to his reaching Kabul, Secretary Rogers said: "I am also very pleased to be stopping in Kabul where I will be the first US Secretary of State ever to visit Afghanistan. The

182 Ibid.

183 Ibid., p. 632.

184 Ibid.

185 Ibid., 28 August 1967.

visit will give me an occasion to express our friendship for that country."¹⁸⁶

Then followed the visit of the then US Vice President, Spiro Agnew to Afghanistan in early part of January 1970. On 6 January 1970, Spiro Agnew reached Kabul. In reply to a toast at a reception given by Afghan Prime Minister, Nur Ahmed Etemadi, the US Vice-President said that many Americans having known Afghanistan had "made us eager to see this beautiful and spirited land and to meet, at first hand, its proud people with their strong tradition of freedom and jealously guarded independence".¹⁸⁷ Referring to the geographical distance between the two countries, the Vice President further added: "We share a kindred spirit and many of the same aspirations ... no vexing problems divide us nor diminish the respect we hold for each other nor lessen our ability to work together."¹⁸⁸ While making a reference to the striking similarities in the national character and outlook of the people between the two countries, Spiro Agnew said that both Washington and Kabul shared common aspirations of deep traditional devotion to freedom and national independence. While praising Afghanistan for having longer history of maintaining such traditions, he said:

... We Americans are proud of our association with Afghanistan over the years in working toward a brighter future for Afghanistan we feel confident that Afghanistan will continue its drive to utilize its resources to build new and better institutions, to improve its

186 Ibid.

187 Ibid., 23 February 1970.

188 Ibid.

agriculture, to broaden its industrial base and create more educational and employment opportunities for its people. As Afghans persevere in their efforts, we look forward to assisting in any way we can. 189

It was evident that the US Vice President had assured the Government of Afghanistan of continued US assistance.

The Visit of Henry Kissinger

On 1 November 1974, the then US Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, visited Afghanistan. During his visit, Kissinger had various rounds of talks with Afghan Head of the State and Prime Minister, Sardar Mohammed Daud and other Afghan officials. The joint communique issued after Kissinger's visit, the same day, at Kabul, noted that both the countries conducted frank discussions on a wide range of issues in the friendly atmosphere that "characterizes US-Afghan relations".¹⁹⁰ Both sides held talks on the wide ranging issues which included bilateral relations, recent developments in the Near East and South Asian region, progress in international detente and mutual interests of both nations of securing a peaceful, stable and cooperative world.¹⁹¹

The Afghan officials apprised the visiting US Secretary of State about their Government's views on regional and global problems. Both countries agreed that "the way to find lasting, durable and peaceful solutions to existing problems and differences between states is through constructive and thorough

189 Ibid.

190 Ibid., 25 November 1974.

191 Ibid.

discussions among all sides concerned".¹⁹² While expressing his appreciation for that opportunity to visit Afghanistan, Henry Kissinger affirmed his admiration for progress being made by the Government and people of Afghanistan. Both Washington and Kabul laid stress on the importance of international cooperation in the field of economic and technical development and "its major role in strengthening international stability and peace".¹⁹³ Afghanistan expressed its "pleasure at the contribution towards this end being made by the United States in Afghanistan through bilateral economic, technical and educational cooperation".¹⁹⁴ The US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, expressed his government's continuing desire to "cooperate with the Republic of Afghanistan in achieving its economic development goals".¹⁹⁵ He further informed the Afghan Government that he would ask a senior official of the US Agency for International Development to visit Afghanistan in the near future to renew with the Afghan authorities joint programmes and progress in bringing projects to fruition.¹⁹⁶

The US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger again visited Afghanistan on 8 August 1976 and held discussions with Sardar Mohammad Daoud, the then President of Afghanistan.¹⁹⁷ The talks were held in the warm and friendly atmosphere. There was friendly

192 Ibid.

193 Ibid.

194 Ibid.

195 Ibid.

196 Ibid.

197 Ibid., 6 September 1976.

and fruitful exchange of views between the two sides on major international questions of mutual interest, especially the development of situation in South Asia and the Middle East. Both the leaders also exchanged views on Afghan-US bilateral relations and cooperation in different fields.¹⁹⁸ Both sides also reaffirmed the importance of the strengthening and expansion of friendship and cooperation between the two countries for preserving and consolidating the regional and world peace. The two sides noted the similarity of the "views and purposes of Afghan and American leaders and peoples regarding national independence and integrity".¹⁹⁹ The Government of Afghanistan pointed out that its traditional policy - based on positive neutrality, nonalignment and friendship and cooperation with all peace-loving countries was guarantor of Afghan independence. The US Secretary of State said that his government appreciated Afghanistan's position.²⁰⁰

In his discussion with other Afghan officials, Henry Kissinger, reaffirmed US interest in participating closely in Afghanistan's economic development and also noted with satisfaction the ongoing work in various spheres with American help.²⁰¹ The Afghan Government expressed its satisfaction at US contributions which had been and were being made through bilateral economic, technical and educational cooperation. Both sides

198 Ibid.

199 Ibid.

200 Ibid.

201 Ibid.

expressed their desire to expand further existing cooperation, particularly in the technical and economic fields.²⁰² On this occasion, an agreement was signed between the two countries for the sale of edible oil to Afghanistan on concessional terms.²⁰³

The pattern of friendly relations between Afghanistan and the United States continued smoothly even after the advent of Carter administration in Washington. During the summer of 1977, the efforts were made by both the countries to arrange a visit of Sardar Daud to the United States. And finally the visit of Sardar Daud to the US was tentatively planned for September 1978, a dream which never came true because of the Communist coup in April 1978 in Kabul. Washington had rather started making preparations for the forthcoming visit of Sardar Daud. A senior State Department expert on Soviet Affairs, Adolph Dubs, who was then overseeing South Asian Affairs in the State Department, told a House of Representatives Subcommittee on 16 March 1978, just six weeks before the coup in Kabul that "internally, the political situation is stable" in Afghanistan and "President Daud remains very much in control and faces no significant opposition".²⁰⁴

The Communist's seizure of power in Kabul by staging a coup in April 1978 served a blow to the rapidly growing ties between Washington and Kabul. The impact of April 1978 coup and subsequent Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, on Afghan-US relations is analyzed in the next chapter.

202 Ibid.

203 Ibid.

204 Ibid., May 1978.

Chapter V

SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

This chapter is an attempt to analyse the developments leading to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 27 December 1979, its aftermath and the international response to get the Soviet aggression vacated from Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was preceded by the seizure of power in Kabul by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in April 1978. The PDPA regime committed Kabul to Moscow.

Communist Coup of April 1978

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power in Kabul on 27 April 1978 by overthrowing the government headed by Sardar Mohammad Daoud which had been saddled into power since 17 July 1973. When Daoud had assumed power he had announced the replacement of monarchy by "a republican system, consistent with the true spirit of Islam".¹ Daoud, a seasoned statesman and a strategic thinker, pursued a "lukewarm" foreign policy in the initial years of his assumption of power. His endorsement of the Soviet plan of collective security in Asia was more governed by the domestic compulsions than a manifestation of the Afghan foreign policy. After securing his domestic position politically, he no more needed the "crutches" of the leftist groups or others. He openly declared that he was not adopting a leftist attitude or

1 Speech of Daoud cited in Hasan Kakkar, "The Fall of the Afghan Monarchy in 1973", International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 9, no. 2, May 1978, p. 214.

accepting the claims of any ideological faction. On 28 February 1974 Sardar Daud said: "We have no connection with any group, and linking us to any group or movement is a sin."²

On 27 April 1978, a coup was staged by the PDPA and the same day Kabul Radio announced that "for the first time in the history of Afghanistan an end has been put to the sultanate of the Mohammadzais (the Afghan Royal Family) and power has passed into the hands of the masses".³ On 30 April 1978, it was announced that power in Afghanistan was being exercised by a Revolutionary Council comprising military and civilians and headed by Noor Mohammad Taraki. On 1 May 1978, the names of other ministers of the new government in Kabul with their portfolios were announced. Babrak Karmal was placed as number two and Hafizullah Amin as number three after Taraki.⁴ On 9 May 1978, President Taraki while announcing the foreign policy of the new Afghan Government, promised a foreign policy of non-alignment and good relations with all neighbours and also singled out such goals as "to further strengthen and consolidate friendly relations and all-round cooperation with the USSR".⁵

2 Fred Halliday, "Revolution in Afghanistan", New Left Review, no. 112, November-December 1978, p. 29.

3 Kabul Radio, 27 April 1978 in FBIS/ME, 28 April 1978, p. 51.

4 Kabul Radio, 9 May 1978, in FBIS/ME, 10 May 1978, p. 51.

5 Thomas T. Hammound, Red Flag Over Afghanistan (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), p. 82.

United States and New Regime in Kabul

There was no immediate official reaction by the United States to the Communist coup in Kabul. The US economic, cultural, educational and Peace Corps programme in Afghanistan continued. This studied silence maintained by Washington showed that it was "unconcerned that another country apparently had joined the Soviet bloc".⁶ While defending the US policy, Theodore Eliot wrote:

The United States continued to keep an open mind toward assisting Afghanistan, maintained a dialogue in Kabul on possible new AID, Peace Corps or cultural programme and indicated a willingness to help to the extent proposals met out our legislative and developmental criteria. This policy made sense because cutting off these programmes unilaterally would duly reduce Afghan options and drive the Afghan Government deeper into the Soviet embrace.⁷

This view was also shared by the then US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, who wrote in his memoirs: "I concluded that our best chance to maintain a measure of influence in Kabul was to continue limited economic aid. To cut off all assistance or refuse recognition would almost certainly weaken our position in Kabul."⁸

The then National Security Adviser to the Carter Administration had approved of the restrained response to the coup in Kabul. He said: "It was an internal coup, there was no evidence of Soviet involvement and hence there was no grounds of an American protest.

6 Theodore L. Eliots, Jr., "The 1978 Afghan Revolution : Some Internal Aspects", Fletcher Forum, vol. 3, no. 4, Spring 1979, p. 61.

7 Ibid.

8 Cyrus Vance, Hard Choices : Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 385.

The regime was undefined and not in consolidation, there was doubt as to whether it could hold power. As long as we could have some influence in Kabul, why cut off aid? It was better to wait and see how things worked out."⁹ However former US ambassador to Kabul, Neumann told the US Department of State that he had known the new leaders of Afghanistan for years and they were definitely communists and would follow orders from Moscow hence the US should stop all aid to the new regime.¹⁰ Cyrus Vance also later realized that the US reaction to the new regime was too mild. He wrote:

In looking back I think we should have expressed our concern more sharply at the time of the April coup that brought Taraki to power. There were reasons why we did not protest more vigorously. Although there was little question that Taraki government would make itself responsive to Moscow, there was room for doubt about whether the Soviets had planned the coup or were involved in its execution. And there was reason to think the strong Afghan nationalism of Taraki, and even more of Hafizullah Amin, might keep Afghanistan from becoming a Soviet satellite... We concluded that our interests would best be served by letting Afghanistan continue to its traditional balancing act between East and West. The United States had few resources in the area and historically we had held the view that our vital interests were not involved there. Moreover, our friends in the region had adopted a wait and see attitude. There was no disposition on their part to add to the instability by supporting opponents of the Marxists in Kabul. Although we were contacted from time to time about Coup plots, my advice was that we not get involved. 11

Though there was no official comment or reaction by Washington to the advent of communist coup in Kabul, the American press reacted very sharply to these developments. An editorial published

9 Quoted in Hammound, n. 5, p. 63.

10 Ibid.

11 Vance, n. 3, p. 386.

in the New York Times expressed concern that "a genuinely non-aligned country had fallen to an avowedly communist one that is likely to tilt towards Moscow".¹² The strategic analysts in the United States also quickly concluded that Afghanistan had been pushed into Soviet affairs opined: "The great game is over and the Russians have won it".¹³ Leon B. Poullada has also regretted that no attempt was made by Washington to break relations with the communist usurpers nor to express official disapproval of such a shift in political power in a strategic country like Afghanistan.¹⁴

Moscow and New Regime

Links of PDPA leaders, who assumed power after the coup, with Soviet Union were very clear. It is worth mentioning here that at the time of coup there were about 350 Soviet military advisers in Afghanistan who played a significant role in the coup.¹⁵ A broadcast from the Kabul Radio reported on 30 April 1978 that one Puzanov of the Soviet Embassy in Kabul met Taraki and gave him a message of diplomatic recognition.¹⁶ Moscow Radio

12 New York Times, 5 May 1978.

13 Drew Middleton, "How Afghans Govt. into Soviet Global Strategy", *ibid.*, 24 June 1976.

14 Leon B. Poullada, "The Failure of American Diplomacy in Afghanistan", World Affairs (Washington), vol. 145, no. 3, Winter 1982/1983, p. 247.

15 UK, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and its Consequences for British Security (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1980), p. 6. Also see Washington Post, 6 May 1978.

16 Henry S. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (Durham, N.C. : Duke Press, 1983), p. 84.

finally reported on 3 May 1978 about according Soviet recognition¹⁷ to Taraki Government but it cited Kabul Radio as the source.

On 3 May 1978 Soviet leaders Brezhnev and Kosygin sent "hearty congratulations" to the Taraki Government and wished for its great success.¹⁸ The advent of communist regime in Kabul had certainly raised high expectations for Kremlin. The soviet daily Pravda while pronouncing the official Soviet attitude towards Kabul, wrote on 6 May 1978: "The interests of social development demanded a fundamental break with obsolete social relations... complex task of forming the new power, the intrigues of internal and external reactionary forces and struggling for a better future for the Afghan people, lie ahead."¹⁹ The reports appearing in the Soviet media by mid-May 1978 indicated that Moscow was happy with the regime.

Hafizullah Amin, the then Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, while on his way to attend the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned countries at Havana, stopped in Moscow on 18 May 1978. He was greeted by the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko. The Soviet media, and the joint communique on their talks, identified the two men not only by their government position but also as members of the politburos, that controlled their respective parties, the communist party of Soviet Union (CPSU) and PDPA.²⁰

17 FBIS Trends, 3 May 1978, p. 2.

18 Tass, 3 May 1978 in FBIS/SU, 4 May 1978, p. 11.

19 Pravda, 6 May 1978 in FBIS/SU, 9 May 1978, p. J1.

20 Tass, 19 May 1978 in FBIS/SU, 19 May 1978, p. J1.

During June-July 1978 Taraki managed to get rid of the leading Parchamites by appointing them as Afghan ambassadors abroad. Nur Ahamad Nur was sent to the United States, Karmal to Czechoslovakia, Anahita Ratebzad to Yugoslavia, A. Mahmud Barialay, Karmal's younger brother to Pakistan.²¹

During the initial months of 1978 Moscow tried to keep a low profile in Afghanistan. In July 1978, an agreement to provide \$ 250 million worth of Soviet weapons to Afghan armed forces²² was neither made public nor Soviet media made any reference to it.

Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation

Despite its overt silence, Moscow was making every attempt to see that the PDPA remained in power and consequently Kabul in the Soviet orbit. A major milestone in this direction was laid during the first week of December 1978 when both countries signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation on 5 December 1978 at Moscow.²³ The treaty was signed during Afghan President Noor Mohammad Taraki's visit to the Soviet Union from 4 to 7 December 1978. This treaty was used as a pretext a year later by the Soviet Union to invade Afghanistan. Article IV of the said treaty, inter-alia said:

21 Kabul Radio, 11 July and 21 August 1978, in FBIS/ME, 27 July and 23 August 1978, pp. 51 and 53.

22 The text of this agreement in Afghanistan, n. 15, Appendix A.

23 For text of the Treaty see, FBIS/SU, 6 December 1978, pp. J10-13.

The high contracting parties, acting in the spirit of the traditions of friendship and good neighbourness, as well as the United Nations Charter, shall consult each other and take by agreement appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence and territorial integrity of the two countries. In the interest of strengthening the defence capacity of the high contracting parties, they shall continue to develop cooperation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreement concluded between them. 24

Under the treaty, though Moscow was not bound to prevent the downfall of the new communist regime in Afghanistan, it was already preparing the possibility of saving it from failure and keeping that country under Soviet influence even by force if needed. After the conclusion of the treaty, Soviet leader Brezhnev said that the relations between the two countries "have assumed a qualitatively new chapter permeated by a spirit of friendship and revolutionary solidarity."²⁵ The treaty came into effect with the exchange of instruments ratifications on 27 May 1979.

The joint Communique issued after Taraki's visit observed that the contacts between the PDPA and the CPSU would be expanded.²⁶ Along with the friendship treaty, another agreement was also signed between Kabul and Moscow to establish a permanent inter-governmental commission on economic cooperation.²⁷ Thus Soviet Union had taken over the overall responsibility of Afghanistan's economic and military responsibilities even in December 1978.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 FBIS Trends, 13 December 1978, p. 6.

27 Moscow Radio, 5 December 1978, in FBIS/SU, 5 December 1978, p. J2.

Assassination of US Ambassador in Kabul

Adolph Dubs, the US Ambassador in Afghanistan was assassinated by four Afghans in Kabul on 14 February 1979. He had presented his credentials on 17 June 1978. Dubs's assassination cast a spell on the already deteriorating US-Afghan relations as there were supposed to be many unresolved questions about the role of Afghan Government in the affairs and its consequent uncooperative attitude.

The assassins of Dubs had held the US Ambassador as hostage in Kabul hotel and demanded from the Afghan Government the release of the arrested some leftist members in exchange for Dubs.²⁸ The US Embassy in Kabul advised the Afghan Government to prolong the negotiations while applying rescue operations. But the Afghan forces along with Soviet advisers stormed the hotel room which resulted in the death of Dubs and the kidnapped.²⁹ According to Richard P. Cronin: "Soviet security advisers appeared to be directing the operation and the Afghan government disregarded US suggestion that an attempt to rescue Dubs by force be delayed."³⁰ The Afghan Government tried to underplay the incident by blaming some groups. As Beverley Male has also opined: "The choice of groups as the culprit appears a convenient ploy to divert attention from the real beneficiaries of the kidnapping and murder of the US Ambassador."³¹ However, the official organ, Kabul Times, in a

28 US Department of State, The Kidnapping and Death of Ambassador Adolph Dubs: Summary of Report of Investigations (Washington, D.C., 1980).

29 Ibid.

30 Richard P. Cronin, Afghanistan, Soviet Invasion and US Response (Washington, 1981), p. 4.

31 Beverley Male, Revolutionary Afghanistan: A Reappraisal (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 151.

defensive editorial wrote:

The terrorists and the enemies of the people of DRA (Democratic Republic of Afghanistan) by committing such an inhuman and cruel act may think they would disturb or damage the ties between the two friendly countries... The people and the government of the DRA and the USA are fully aware of the acts of their enemies. They know that such provocative acts will not undermine the friendly relations between the two nations. 32

Such a defence in an official daily was nothing but a move by the communist regime in Kabul to absolve itself from the responsibility of being involved in Dubs' murder and thus shift the blame to others. The outraged Carter Administration accused Moscow of involvement in the bungling that caused Dubs' death but Kremlin denied it. The US economic aid to Afghanistan was slashed.³³

On 23 July 1978 Washington announced the withdrawal of most of its diplomatic personnel from Afghanistan because of "security reasons".³⁴ Although the Carter Administration had announced a drastic curtailment of US economic aid to Afghanistan but it was not totally stopped until in August 1979, when President Carter signed PL 96-53, the International Development Cooperation Act of 1979, into law.³⁵ Section 505 of the said Act prohibited any further assistance to Afghans unless the President certified to the Congress that the Afghan Government had officially apologized and assumed responsibility for Ambassador Dubs and agreed to

32 Kabul Times, 15 February 1979.

33 New York Times, 23 February 1979.

34 Ibid., 24 July 1979.

35 Cronin, n. 30, p. 4.

provide suitable protection for all US personnel in Afghanistan.³⁶
 Thus, in the aftermath of Dubs' assassination, the US relations with Afghanistan had reached the lowest ebb.

On 15 September 1979, the Afghan Revolutionary Council announced that Taraki had asked to be relieved from party and state posts on health grounds,³⁷ and Hafizullah Amin became the new President of Afghanistan.

Soviet Union and Amin Regime

Amin had developed a distrust towards Moscow especially after what happened on 14 September 1979 when an attempt on his life was made in the presence of Russian Ambassador. On 17 September 1979, Soviet leaders, Brezhnev and Kosygin, while sending congratulations to Amin expressed the confidence that "fraternal relations between the Soviet Union and revolutionary Afghanistan will be further developed successfully on the basis of the treaty of friendship".³⁸ The Moscow's message lacked the usual Soviet warmth. Another fact indicating Soviet disenchantment with Amin was that Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin after visiting in early 1979 on his way back to Moscow did neither stop over Kabul nor send usual message of greetings.³⁹

Shal Wali, Foreign Minister in Amin's Cabinet accused the Soviet Ambassador in Kabul, Puzanov not only of harbouring four

36 Ibid.

37 Kabul Times, 16 September 1979.

38 Pravda, 18 September 1979, FBIS/SU, 19 September 1979, p. D1.

39 Halliday, n. 2, pp. 34-35.

former ministers⁴⁰ but also of being involved in a conspiracy to assassinate Amin and asked Moscow to recall the Soviet ambassador which was done in November 1979.⁴¹ The new Soviet Ambassador in Kabul was Fikriat Akhmetdzhanovich Taibeev who assumed charge on 28 November 1979.⁴²

Prior to his assumption of power Amin, as a Foreign Minister and later on as a Prime Minister under Taraki, had seldom shown his disenchantment for Moscow in his public pronouncements. He said on 22 July 1979: "Any person and any element who harms the friendship between Afghanistan and Soviet Union will be considered the enemy of the country, enemy of our people and enemy of our revolution. We will not allow anybody in Afghanistan to act against the friendship of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union."⁴³ However, at the same time he also seemed worried about the increasing Soviet presence in Afghanistan. On 17 July 1979 he said: "Those who boast of friendship with us, they can really be our friend when they respect our independence, our soil and our prideful traditions."⁴⁴ Male opines that Amin was too

40 On 14 September 1979, four ministers, Major Sherjan Mazdoori, Colonel Mohammed Aslam Watanjar, Colonel Syed Mohammad Gulabzoy and Asadullah Sarwari were dismissed by Amin and after the shoot out incident, they reportedly took refuge in Soviet Embassy in Kabul. See Hammond, n. 5, p. 83.

41 Cable no. 07444 from US Embassy in Kabul to State Department, 11 October 1979, *ibid.*, p. 86.

42 Kabul Times, 1 December 1979.

43 *Ibid.*, 23 July 1979.

44 *Ibid.*, 21 July 1979.

much of a realist to imagine that the PDPA could survive without Soviet assistance and in any case too good a socialist to wish to see relations with the Soviet Union deteriorate further.⁴⁵

According to Western political analysts, Moscow was anxious to draft Karmal as Taraki's successor and it could be done only after eliminating Amin. And such planning was done in mid August 1979.⁴⁶ Taraki's visit to Moscow on 9 September 1979 had been utilized by the Soviet leadership to implement it. Amin never made public his distrust or disenchantment with Moscow but he seemed to be equally concerned with increasing Soviet influence in Afghanistan. In early October 1979, Amin, while acknowledging the Soviet military aid, said: "Soviet Union is providing whatever we can use ... (to defend Afghanistan) ... but we will defend our country ... (and will) never give this trouble to our international brothers to fight for us."⁴⁷ Thus it can be surmized that Amin was interested in maintaining good relations with Moscow but at the same time was^{not} opposed to increasing Soviet influence in Afghanistan.

United States and Amin Regime

After Adolph Dubs death, Washington had almost become lukewarm toward the communist regime in Kabul. On 11 September 1979, Amin had told the American Charge d'Affaires, J. Bruce Amstutz, that he wanted to have "friendly relations" with the United States.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Male, n. 31, p. 184.

⁴⁶ Ibid. Also see Bradsher, n. 16, p. 116.

⁴⁷ FBIS Trends, 3 October 1979, pp. 15-16.

⁴⁸ Cable no. 06789 from Kabul to State Department, 11 September 1979, p. 1, cited in Hammound, n. 5, p. 87.

However Amstutz did not take it seriously.

Following the assumption of power by Amin, on 15 September 1979 the US State Department became more interested in the question of Amin's attitude toward the United States. Amstutz called on Amin on 27 September and found that the latter was "all charm and friendliness" and once more spoke in favour of better relations with the United States.⁴⁹ Shah Wali, Foreign Minister in Amin's Government, met the senior officials of US State Department in New York on 27 September 1979. In early October 1979, Archer Blood, a US diplomat went to Kabul and met Amin. The former told that Amin "wanted American aid without offering anything in return".⁵⁰

The Carter Administration made the issue of "violation of Human Rights" in Afghanistan as a starting point with Amin.⁵¹ The violation of human rights took place when Amin was in power. The report prepared by the State Department devoted six pages to violation of human rights in Afghanistan. The report contained sweeping generalizations without providing evidence of specific instances of atrocities which could be documents or checked.

Archer Blood in his assessment to the US Department of State reported that Amin was "content for the time being with a polite but limited relationship, which both countries would

49 Cable no. 07218 from Kabul to the State Department, 27 September 1979, p. 1, *ibid.*, p. 87.

50 Cited in Male, n. 31, p. 200.

51 US, Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights for 1979 (Washington, D.C. : Government Printing Press, 1980), pp. 707-12.

refrain from exacerbating by word or action".⁵² Even the US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance summed up: "At maximum we regard our current dialogue with the Afghans as a means of exploring the possibilities for a less contentious relationship and we are not overtly sanguine that even this limited objective can be sustained."⁵³

The above analysis reveals that the US missed a golden opportunity by not making the strategic advantages of the situation. As Poullada has aptly observed: "American weakness and complacency over development in Afghanistan convinced the Soviets that America had abandoned the field to them there, and that they could safely move into the vacuum with tacit American consent."⁵⁴

SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

The world was taken by surprise by the events of 27-28 December 1979 when sizeable number of Soviet troops equipped with sophisticated weapons invaded Afghanistan in which Hafizullah Amin was killed and Babrak Karmal was installed as a new ruler of Afghanistan. The foundations of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had been laid much earlier and the December end 1979 episode was the final act.

52 Cable no. 07726 from Kabul to State Department, 28 October 1979, pp. 1-3, cited in Hammound, n. 5, p. 287.

53 Cable no. 282436, State Department to US Embassy in Islamabad, 29 October 1979, p. 1, *ibid.*, p. 87.

54 Poullada, n. 14, p. 248.

According to Thomas T. Hammond, the information for preliminary planning by Moscow would have been collected when General A. Epishev, the head of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet armed forces, made an inspection tour of Afghanistan in April 1979.⁵⁵ This was followed by the visit to Afghanistan by General Ivan G. Pavloski, Deputy Minister of Defence from August 1979 to October 1979.⁵⁶ Pavloski had earlier undertaken a similar mission in Czechoslovakia in 1968 prior to the Soviet invasion of that country and he led the Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia. Thus he was a logical choice to make the assessment for launching Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Along with preparation of such strategic planning, there was also augmentation in the presence of Soviet military and civilian advisers in Afghanistan during October-November 1979. The Afghans had almost lost control of the essential levers of power to 1,500 or more Soviet officials in the civilian ministries and between 3,500 and 4,000 Soviet officials and technicians in the Afghan armed forces.⁵⁷ An estimated half of the 8,000 officers and non-commissioned officers of the Afghan army had been purged in October 1979.⁵⁸

In late November 1979, Moscow put its troops in a state of alert and reservists were called up to fill up understrength

55 Hammond , n. 5, p. 9.

56 Afghanistan, n. 15, pp. 37-38.

57 US, Department of State, Chronology of Recent Developments Related to Afghanistan (Washington, D.C., 1980), p. 4.

58 The Economist (London), 17 November 1979, pp. 68-69.

combat divisions in the central Asian military district.

Bridging equipment was moved to the Afghan border.⁵⁹ The Warsaw Pact countries had also placed their troops on an advanced stage of readiness. By mid-December Moscow had airlifted about two battalions of troops with heavy weapons into Bagram Air Base,⁶⁰ whose management had already fallen into the Russian hands.

While making strategic and military preparations to invade Afghanistan, Moscow also continued efforts to make Amin agree to invite Soviet troops into Afghanistan. On 28 November 1979, a Soviet deputy minister of internal affairs, Lt. General V.S. Paputin arrived in Kabul to discuss "mutual cooperation and other issues"⁶¹ with the Government of Afghanistan. According to Thomas T. Hammond, Paputin's real mission was to help prepare Kabul for the invasion by getting control of the Afghan police, to pressurize Amin to step aside in favour of Karmal, persuading Amin to invite the Soviet Union to send large numbers of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, if all those failed, assassinating Amin.⁶²

On 17 December 1979 there occurred a shooting incident at the official residence of Amin in which his nephew, Asadullah Amin was injured and then flew to Moscow for treatment.⁶³ Asadullah was the head of Afghan intelligence service and Amin's

59 Patrick J. Garrity, "The Soviet Military Stake in Afghanistan 1956-1979", Journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies (London), vol. 125, no. 3, September 1980, pp. 35-36.

60 Ibid.

61 Kabul Times, 1 December 1979.

62 Hammond, n. 5, p. 98.

63 Detailed account appeared in New York Times, 2 January 1980.

top security aide was thus removed. The airlifting of Soviet troops to Kabul had started by 23 December 1979 and by 27 December 1979, their strength was sizeable enough to take control of Afghanistan. Thus by the evening of 27 December 1979, the Soviet forces had launched the invasion and asserted its control over Kabul and other strategic places in Afghanistan. A late evening broadcast, on 27 December 1979 by Babrak Karmal as reported by Soviet news agency Tass, said :

... who upto the present have been subjected to intolerable violence and torture by the bloody apparatus of Hafizullah Amin and his minions, these agents of American imperialism... The day of freedom and rebirth ... has arrived ... The central Committee of the united Peoples Democratic party and the revolutionary council party of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan proclaim true peoples power... we have once again raised the banner of national Jihad ... a just war of the Afghan people for true democratic justice, for respect for the holy Islamic religion ... for implementation of the aims of the glorious April revolution. 64

In another broadcast on 27 December 1979 the Kabul Radio announced the request of Afghan Government for Soviet armed assistance:

Because of the continuation and expansion of aggression, intervention and provocation by the foreign enemies of Afghanistan, and for the purpose of defending the gains of saur revolution, territorial integration, national independence and preservation of peace and security, and on the basis of the treaty of friendship, good neighbourliness and cooperation dated 5 December 1978, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan earnestly demands that the USSR render urgently the political moral and economic assistance including military aid to Afghanistan. The Government of the USSR has accepted the proposal of Afghan side. 55

64 Tass, 27 December 1979 , in FBIS/SU, 28 December 1979, pp.D1-2.

65 Kabul Radio, 27 December 1979 in FBIS/ME, 28 December 1979, p. 52.

This statement was the justification for Soviet invasion of Afghanistan implying that Afghanistan requested Moscow to send their armed forces and the latter complied accordingly. The above sequence of events reveals that the Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan with the help of its armed forces and installed Babrak Karmal as a puppet in Kabul whose strings were in the hands of Kremlin. A statement published in Pravda on 31 December 1979 stated that the Soviet Union had decided to grant Afghanistan's:

Insistent request ... (for) immediate aid and support in the struggle against external aggression ... and to send to Afghanistan a limited Soviet military contingent that will be used exclusively for assistance in preventing the armed interference from the outside. The Soviet contingent will be completely pulled out of Afghanistan when the reason that necessitated such an action exists no longer. 66

By 1 January 1980, fifty thousand Soviet troops were in Afghanistan and more were on the way. Thus by January end 1980, the number of Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan was estimated between 80,000 to 100,000.⁶⁷

The emergence of Karmal regime backed by Soviet troops pushed Afghanistan into Soviet orbit and its nonaligned status was completely undermined. Engineering of the April 1978 coup and signing of the Afghan Soviet friendship treaty in December 1978 were steps towards the final takeover of Afghanistan by Moscow in December 1979.

66 Pravda, 31 December 1979, FBIS/SU, 31 December 1979, pp. D7-10.

67 Jamir Phillips, "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan", Backgrounders (Washington, D.C. : Heritage Foundation, 1980), p. 3.

International Response

It is one of Newton's laws that every action evokes reaction. Similar analogy is applicable in international relations. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan took the world by surprise and it severely condemned and criticized. The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council have passed resolutions condemning the "aggression" in Afghanistan and called for the withdrawal of "all foreign troops from Afghanistan". Besides, the European Economic Community (EEC), Organisation of Islamic Countries, Seventh and Eighth Nonaligned summits, and other countries have severely criticized the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan while calling for the unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. However the United States has played a leading role in this regard by not only condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan but has taken certain steps since 1980 to help resolve the tangle. The succeeding pages present an indepth analysis of the international response evoked by Soviet Union by invading Afghanistan.

(A) The US Response

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was not only alarming but challenging as well for the United States. The US President Jimmy Carter, was surprised and his reaction was severe and spontaneous. He said that "we are the other Super Power on earth and it became my responsibility ... to take action that would prevent the Soviets from (accomplishing) this invasion with impunity."⁶⁸ A day after the Soviet invasion,

⁶⁸ Presidential Documents (Washington, D.C.), no. 16, 14 January 1980, p. 41.

President Carter informed the leaders of France, United Kingdom (UK), West Germany, Italy and Pakistan about what had happened in Afghanistan and all leaders agreed that "the Soviet action is a grave threat to peace".⁶⁹ Sensing the magnitude of Soviet threat, President Carter, during the first week of January 1980, said that the Soviet act in Afghanistan posed a grave threat to peace because of the threat of further Soviet expansion in to neighbouring countries in South West Asia and also because such an aggressive military policy is unsettling to other peoples throughout the world.⁷⁰ While refuting Soviet claim that they had not invaded Afghanistan but were "invited" President Carter said: "...The Soviet claims, falsely that they were invited in to Afghanistan to help protect that country from some unnamed outside threat."⁷¹ President Carter did not confine US concern over developments in Afghanistan to making public pronouncements but also took up the issue with Soviet leaders. On 28 December 1979, President Carter in a message sent to Soviet leader Brezhnev called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops and warned that if Afghanistan action was not corrected it "could have very serious consequences to United States - Soviet relations".⁷² Finding that Brezhnev had not given a satisfactory answer, President Carter said on 31 December 1979 :

69 Ibid., no. 15, 31 December 1979, p. 2. Also see New York Times, 29 December 1979.

70 Presidential Documents, no. 16, 14 January 1980, p. 25.

71 Ibid.

72 New York Times, 30 December 1979.

He (Brezhnev) claimed that he had been invited by the Afghan government to come in and protect Afghanistan from some outside third-nation threat. This was obviously false because the person that he claimed invited him in, President Amin, was murdered or assassinated after the Soviets pulled their coup. He also claimed that they would remove their forces from Afghanistan as soon as the situation should be stabilized and the outside threat to Afghanistan was eliminated. So that was the tone of his message to me, which as I say, was completely inadequate and completely misleading. 73

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also proved instrumental in changing US perceptions about Moscow. As President Carter said that "the Soviets have seriously misjudged our own nation's strength and resolve and our unity and determination and the condemnation that has accrued to them by the "world community" ...⁷⁴ They underestimated the courage and the tenacity of freedom in that country (Afghanistan), and they did not anticipate the world's quick and forceful response to their aggression."⁷⁵

The US reaction to these developments irked Moscow and the Soviet media especially Pravda accused the United States of "anti-Soviet hysteria reminiscent of the lamentable cold war times".⁷⁶ To this, President Carter added: "We do not want to return to the cold war, we do not want to have a confrontation with the Soviet Union... The Soviets have tried to mislead the world, they have failed."⁷⁷ However the Soviet media continued its criticism of Washington while concealing the real facts.

73 Ibid., 1 January 1980.

74 Presidential Documents, no. 16, 28 January 1980, p. 111.

75 Ibid., no. 16, 25 February 1980, pp. 386-87.

76 Pravda, 8 January 1980, in FBIS/SU, 10 January 1980, pp. A7-8.

77 Presidential Documents, no. 16, 3 March 1980, p. 387.

The above analysis reveals that the Carter Administration's reaction to the Soviet invasion was very sharp though belated. But now the question arises whether United States had prior information of what was going to happen in Afghanistan and if so why it failed to preempt the Soviet move. An answer to this question lies in the analysis of US policy prior to the invasion. As we have seen in the preceding pages, the US had reacted mildly to the advent of communist coup in April 1978 and until the assassination of Ambassador Dubs, the United States' flow of economic assistance to Kabul continued and it was drastically curtailed only after February 1979.

Between April 1978 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December end 1979, the US policy towards Afghanistan under Carter administration was mainly determined by Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Adviser and other top officials of the State Department, particularly, Christopher and Marshall Shulman, besides Carter himself.⁷⁸ The main difference of opinion towards Soviet Union existed between Vance and Brzezinski. Cyrus Vance and his chief Soviet expert Marshall Shulman were in favour of soft-peddling towards Soviet Union to preserve the spirit of detente while Brzezinski who also favoured detente was, however, less optimistic of any outcome. Vance was perhaps convinced that the US should continue appeasing Moscow to get agreements like Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II (SALT II) approved by it. Thus he said in April 1978: "The Soviets may find it difficult to understand some of the things

78 Hammond, n. 5, p. 105.

we do. They do not like many of the things we stand for. The future is going to depend a lot on whether or not we can begin to make progress on areas of central importance. At the heart of this lies SALT. If we can eventually reach a SALT agreement, which I believe we can, this will begin to change the whole character of the relationship, put it on the right track again."⁷⁹

Vance was honest enough to admit that he and Brzezinski had conflicting attitudes toward the USSR: "We have differences of view from time to time... A different perspective with respect to the Soviet Union is the biggest set of differences. I believe it is essential we try to find common ground (with the Soviets)... we should not be fearful of everything they do and automatically accept the thesis of the worst case motivations."⁸⁰

On the other hand, Brzezinski was of the opinion that the relationship between Washington and Moscow was inherently competitive and even conclusion of any number of agreements including the SALT would not be able to alter Soviet determination to undermine the United States and make itself the dominant power on the globe.⁸¹ In his opinion Moscow did not want true "peaceful coexistence" with the West and could not be trusted. He also regarded Vance and Shulman as "accommodationists" who were willing to go much too far in accommodating American policies to please Moscow, in the vain hope that this would buy peace.⁸²

79 *Time* (New York), 24 April 1978, p. 20.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

81 Quoted in Hammond, n. 5, p. 107.

82 *Ibid.*

This difference in opinions among the advisers of Carter administration toward Soviet Union also determined their policy perspectives on Afghanistan after the Communist coup of April 1978. Despite the increasing Soviet military activities during 1979, there were no public statements by the US State Department either to forewarn the US administration or to the world about impending Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It was not until 21 December 1979, that the US State Department finally revealed that the Soviets had assembled more than 30,000 soldiers on the Afghan border and had flown three battalions of troops to an air base near Kabul.⁸³ Though one State Department official told the New York Times that the "Soviet preparation on the Afghan border show all the marks of a major military intervention"⁸⁴ but Cyrus Vance, on being asked whether Soviets were going to invade Afghanistan, replied, "That would be only speculation on my part".⁸⁵

Lee Hamilton, Chairman of the House Sub-committee on Europe and the Middle East, in a letter to Marshal Shulman, on 18 March 1980 asked that when the US Government knew in October 1979 about a high-level Soviet military visit to Afghanistan, "then why does our government wait until December (1979) to make any official presentation or protest to the Soviet government"?⁸⁶ Shulman replied that

83 New York Times, 22 December 1979.

84 Ibid.

85 Ibid.

86 US Congress, House of Representatives, Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East, 96th Congress, East-West Relations in the Aftermath of Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1980), p. 115.

the actual Soviet movement of troops and equipment towards Afghanistan was observed only in late November 1979 "prompting us to make December approaches to the Soviets... We acted as promptly and as forcefully as the evidence warranted".⁸⁷

A detailed analysis of the divergent views among the policy makers of the Carter Administration towards Afghanistan prior to Soviet invasion, is beyond the scope of present study. It suffices to say that the lack of decisive action by the Carter administration "may have been due in part to the tradition of US government, whether Democratic or Republican, of looking upon Afghanistan as an insignificant country".⁸⁸

By January 1980, the Carter administration had realized that the Soviet invasion and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan posed a challenge to US strategic interests in the Gulf region and South West Asia and a direct threat to its security. As President Carter said on 14 January 1980:

Our own nation's security was directly threatened. There is no doubt that the Soviets move into Afghanistan if done without adverse consequences, would have resulted in the temptation to move again until they reached warm water port or until they acquired control over a major portion of the world's oil supplies...⁸⁹ The Soviet Union has altered the strategic situation in that part of the world in a very ominous fashion.⁹⁰.. It places the Soviets within aircraft striking range of the vital oil resources of the Persian Gulf; it threatens a strategically located country Pakistan; (and) it poses the prospect of increased Soviet pressure on Iran and on other nations of the Middle East. 91

87 Ibid., p. 118.

88 Hammond, n. 5, p. 112.

89 Presidential Documents, no. 16, 14 January 1980, p. 41.

90 Ibid., no. 16, 28 January 1980, p. 165.

91 Ibid., p. 185.

Again on 23 January, President Carter in State of the Union address to the Congress, which was labelled as "Carter Doctrine", said: "Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force."⁹²

The post-Dubs assassination and pre-invasion period had witnessed the mounting Soviet influence in Afghanistan which gradually led to the decline in Afghan-US relations. Jack C. Nikolas, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, in a statement before the Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House of Representatives, said on 15 May 1979 that US relations with Afghanistan had regrettably deteriorated significantly.⁹³ He further added that as the Soviet Union had become more directly involved in Afghanistan, "we have detected a corresponding decline in interest in US programmes and in sensitivity to our concerns..."⁹⁴ Washington had made efforts to make clear to the Communist regime in Kabul that good relations were a two-way street which required concrete steps from both sides to demonstrate their interest in cooperation: "This distresses us that this is not the case in US-Afghan relations, particularly, because we know that there is still a great reservoir of good will among the Afghan people for the US

92 Ibid., p. 197.

93 Department of State Bulletin (Washington, D.C.), October 1979.

94 Ibid.

and the Americans, as there is for Afghanistan in our country..."⁹⁵

Niklos further opined that the existing state of affairs was not the US creation:

It is the inescapable result when one party to a relationship shows no interest in giving life and substance to these ties... Because of the lack of interest we have reduced our economic assistance programme, terminated our military training programme and for the time being withdrawn our Peace Corps volunteers and staff. 96

The increasing Soviet influence after the April 1978 coup in Kabul was detrimental to the United States' strategic interests in the region. Such an indication was given by Harold H. Saunders, Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs in a statement before the Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House of Representatives on 26 September 1979 when he said, "Our effort to encourage peace and stability in that troubled region is clearly made more difficult by Afghanistan's internal unrest and the exodus of refugees from Afghanistan..."⁹⁷

The United States regretted the "reorientation in Afghan foreign policy ... away from its traditional genuine non-alignment..."⁹⁸

Washington also realized that direct interference in Afghanistan by any country including the Soviet Union, would threaten the integrity of that country as well as the peace in the region and it was a "matter of concern to the United States..."⁹⁹ Saunders

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., December 1979.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

told the Sub-Committee that the US had no special interest in Afghanistan and at the same time "we have repeatedly impressed on the Soviet Government the dangers of more direct involvement in the fighting in Afghanistan..."¹⁰⁰

As has been described in the preceding pages, when Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the United States not only condemned the Soviet aggression but also took some measures to persuade Moscow to vacate the aggression in Afghanistan.

The specific US measures against the Soviet action in Afghanistan were envisaged in the announcement made by President Carter in his message to the nation on 4 January 1980 suggesting US measures in this regard:

- (i) Blocking grain sales to the Soviet Union beyond the 8 million metric tons already contracted. This means withholding an additional 17 million metric tons which the Soviets have already ordered;
- (ii) Stopping the sale of high technology and strategic items to the Soviet Union, including computers and oil drilling equipment;
- (iii) Curbing Soviet fishing privileges in US waters. The catch allowed to Soviet fishing fleets in 1980 would be reduced from 350,000 tons to 75,000 tons, resulting in an estimated Soviet economic loss of \$ 55 million to \$ 60 million;
- (iv) Delaying the opening of a new Soviet consulate in New York and an American consulate in Kiev;
- (v) Postponing new cultural and economic exchanges between the two countries, now under consideration;
- (vi) Boycotting the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow... 101

The United States imposed these sanctions while its allies and other friendly countries did not follow the suit. A study

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid., January 1980.

undertaken by the Congress Research Service (CRS) to assess the impact of sanctions imposed by the Carter administration against Soviet Union, concluded that Carter's sanctions might have had political benefits but:

the economic punishment to the USSR was quite limited ... while many nations supported the Olympic boycott, no other nations followed fully the US embargo and restrictive actions. This illustrates the difference between the United States and the other Western allies, which generally supported the political aspects of the sanctions while not supporting the principle of economic punishment adopted by the Carter administration ... 102

The United States did boycott the Moscow Olympic games and it claimed to have "helped to persuade 59 other countries to take similar action ..." ¹⁰³ However, despite the US boycott, about 50 countries participated in the Moscow Olympic games and the Carter administration "could only be dissatisfied at the level of support for the boycott on the part of its traditional allies in Western Europe..." ¹⁰⁴

In the wake of sanctions declared by the Carter administration, the Soviet media launched a virulent propaganda against the United States. A statement issued on 6 January 1980 by Soviet news agency Tass declared that, "If the White House decided to influence in some way the Soviet Union and its foreign policy, this is a hopeless undertaking. Such attempts flopped in the

102 US, House Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East, An Assessment of the Afghanistan Sanctions: Implications for Trade and Diplomacy in the 1980s (Washington, 1981), p.8.

103 Ibid.

104 Ibid.

past and they will flop now..."¹⁰⁵ The Soviet leader, Brezhnev in a statement published in Pravda dated 13 January 1980 said that Carter's steps "show that Washington again, like decades ago, is trying to speak to us in the language of the cold war".¹⁰⁶ The statement further contended that:

the arrogation by Washington as some sort of a "right to reward" or "punish" independent sovereign states raised a question of a principled character. In effect, by such action the US government deals a blow at the orderly international law system of relations among states ... the world is increasingly forming the impression of the United States as an absolutely unreliable partner in interstate ties ... These actions of the US administration will not inflict on us the damage obviously hoped for by their initiators ... they will hit back at their initiators if not today then tomorrow. ¹⁰⁷

It had become evident that Moscow did not care for the United States' move of imposing sanctions against it or the criticism of the Soviet action in Afghanistan.

On 28 December 1980, marking the occasion of the first anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter in a statement observed that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and attempted forceful occupation "of that fiercely independent non-aligned Moslem nation has had propoundly negative impact on the international community".¹⁰⁸ President

105 Tass, 6 January 1980, in FBIS/SU, 2 January 1980, pp. A1-4.

106 Pravda, 13 January 1980, in FBIS/SU, 14 January 1980, pp. A1-8.

107 Ibid.

108 United States International Communication Agency (USICA), Chronology of Afghanistan Events : A Retrospective (New Delhi, 1980), p. 2.

Carter further urged Moscow to respond to those countries which were urging withdrawal of Soviet military forces and inviting Soviet cooperation in the search of a political solution to the Afghanistan crisis: "For our part, we have offered to join in the effort to find a political solution involving a Soviet withdrawal, and we repeat that offer to-day..."¹⁰⁹

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had accelerated the process of reinforcements of some form of qualified globalism for the US policy. "The invasion appeared to challenge the United States to create a policy based on a new national consensus, one that required the necessary military power to support whatever role it determined to play".¹¹⁰

In 1981, when Ronald Reagan assumed the Presidency of the United States, the US policy toward Soviet Union on the issue of Afghanistan became more clear and practical. The main elements of President Reagan's policy towards Afghan crisis included humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees seeking shelter in Pakistan, diplomatic support for a political settlement along the lines of the United Nations Resolution the resolutions passed by the Islamic Conference and Non-Aligned Summit Conference.

The US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig said on 22 May 1981 that the United States was in favour of convening an international conference to focus the world attention on Afghan crisis and take measures to defuse it.¹¹¹ While cautioning

109 Ibid.

110 Ibid.

111 USICA, Press Release (New Delhi), 23 May 1981.

Moscow that it could not dominate the world by invading Afghanistan, Haig further added: "The people of Afghanistan overwhelmingly oppose the Soviet occupation and the Babrak Karmal regime. The vast majority of the world's nations are challenging the Soviets to come to the negotiating table, to agree to a political solution, to withdraw their forces and to restore Afghanistan a non-aligned status..."¹¹² While urging the Soviet Union not to underestimate the potential Afghanistan resistance and international pressure he said: "By supporting initiative such as that of the European community we offer the Soviet Union the alternative of an honourable solution..."¹¹³

The US Ambassador to the United Nations, J. Kirckpatrick, while addressing the UN General Assembly on 16 November 1981 on resolution on Afghanistan, called for:

- (i) Immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces;
- (ii) Restoration of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonalignment of Afghanistan;
- (iii) Restoration of the right of the Afghan people to choose their own form of government and economic and social system, free from outside intervention, coercion or restraint; and
- (iv) Return of the refugees to their homeland... 114

She further added that Washington was firmly committed to the above mentioned terms: "The struggle of the Afghan nation for survival was consistent with the basic and most cherished purposes of the UN..."¹¹⁵

112 USICA, Backgrounder (New Delhi), 12 August 1981.

113 Ibid.

114 Department of State Bulletin, January 1982.

115 Ibid.

President Reagan also showed his grave concern over the developments in Afghanistan and the continued presence of Soviet troops on Afghan soil. While lauding the courage of Afghan people, President Reagan said that despite the presence of over 90,000 Soviet combat troops, "the courageous people of Afghanistan effectively deny Soviet forces control of most of Afghanistan..."¹¹⁶ He further urged Moscow sincerely implement the proposals set forth by the UN General Assembly for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan "so that an independent and non-aligned nation can be re-established".¹¹⁷

President Reagan issued a proclamation on 10 March 1982 designating 21 March as "Afghan Day" in the United States, to commemorate the valour of the Afghan people and to condemn the continuing Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The proclamation said : "The international community, with the United States joining governments around the world, has condemned the invasion of Afghanistan as a violation of every standard of decency and international law and has called for a withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan..."¹¹⁸ The message further added that "Afghanistan Day" would serve to recall not only these events, but also the principles involved "when a people struggles for freedom to determine its own future, the right to be free from

116 USICA, "President Reagan calls for Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan", Official Text (New Delhi), 29 December 1981.

117 Ibid.

118 USICA, "President Reagan's Afghanistan Day Proclamation", Official Text, 11 March 1982.

foreign interference and the right to practice religion according to the dictates of conscience..."¹¹⁹

Keeping in view the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the question has been raised as to what can the United States do to prevent more such Communist takeovers in the Third World countries. In this regard Thomas T. Hammond has suggested that "the US must be prepared to intervene diplomati-¹²⁰cally, economically and, if necessary, militarily..."

The public opinion in the United States has strongly favoured the full US support to the Afghan freedom fighters. The National Association of pro-American, in its resolution on "support for Afghan Freedom Fighters", passed on 21 April 1983, resolved that "President Reagan and the Congress should authorise support necessary to restore Afghanistan's independence and freedom..."¹²¹ It also called for diplomatic and economic pressure to be brought against the Soviet Union to "immediately withdraw their forces from Afghanistan..."¹²² Both the Houses of the US Congress - Senate and the House of Representatives, have also expressed their solidarity and support for the Afghan Mujahideen. On 6 October 1983, the House of Representatives in a resolution passed unanimously observed that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the first Soviet seizure of an independent

119 Ibid.

120 Thomas T. Hammond, "Afghanistan: The Road to the West", The Washington Post, 20 January 1983.

121 Congressional Record (Washington), vol. 129, no. 52, 21 April 1983, p. 1757.

122 Ibid.

territory since the 1940's and represented "a dangerous development in Soviet foreign policy..."¹²³ It further noted that the struggle for liberation in Afghanistan could succeed "if those of us believed in freedom could render support ..." ¹²⁴ The resolution envisaged that the policy of the US should be :

- (i) To encourage and support the people of Afghanistan in their struggle to be free from foreign domination;
- (ii) To provide the people of Afghanistan if they so request with material assistance as the US considers appropriate to help them fight effectively for their freedom;
- (iii) To pursue a negotiated settlement of the war in Afghanistan based on the total withdrawal of Soviet troops and the recognition of the inalienable right of the Afghan people to choose their own destiny free from outside interference or coercion so that the four millions of Afghan refugees return to their country in safety and in honour... ¹²⁵

The US Under Secretary of State, Lawrence Eagleburger, while addressing a forum on Afghanistan, sponsored by the US State Department and the Centre for Afghanistan Studies of the University of Nebraska, said that the Reagan Administration recognized that the invasion of and continued occupation of Afghanistan by Moscow was destroying the infrastructure of this poor country: "It has taken the lives of thousands of civilians while creating the world's largest refugee community - nearly three million Afghans now living in exile..." ¹²⁶ While summing up

123 Ibid., vol. 129, no. 133, 6 October 1983, p. S.13791.

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

126 USICA, "US Unalterably Opposes Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan", Official Text, 15 December 1983.

the US policy, Eagleburger said:

Our strategic interests as well as our humanitarian instincts make it absolutely essential that the Soviet aggression be checked. We continue to look for signs that the Soviet Union is willing to work seriously for a negotiated settlement that would return Afghanistan to its people. Until then, we will continue to support and be inspired by the spirit of the Afghan Mujahideen in their fight for freedom... 127

The US support for Afghanistan, in the wake of Soviet occupation has been vigorous, constant and encouraging. It has increased with passage of time. While addressing the UN General Assembly on 15 November 1984, the US Ambassador to the UN, J. Kirakpatrick, envisaged the American viewpoint:

The elements comprising the honourable solution of Afghanistan ... immediate withdrawal of foreign troops, the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, non-aligned character of Afghanistan, the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint, and the creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes... 128

Even President Reagan on 27 December 1984, in a message marking the fifth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, said that the United States had told the Soviet leaders "that their occupying forces in Afghanistan constitutes a serious impending ¹²⁹ to improving US-Soviet relations..." Recalling the five years of Soviet armed occupation of Afghanistan, the US President said

127 Ibid.

128 Department of State Bulletin, December 1984. Also see USICA, US Ambassador Cites Resolution on Afghanistan (New Delhi, 1984), p. 10.

129 USICA, "Reagan Calls Afghan Crisis as Impediment to US-USSR Ties", Official Text, 27 December 1984.

that the Soviet Army had waged war in the proud and deeply religious people of Afghanistan and there was no end in sight as yet. "This fifth anniversary of Afghan defiance stands in stark contrast... yet there is a message of inspiration in the cauvel tale being written..."¹³⁰ While referring to the repeated condemnation of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan by the United Nations, President Reagan said: "For our part, the US has made clear ... (that) we cannot and will not remain silent on Afghanistan. We join our voice with other members of the world community in calling for a prompt, negotiated end to this brutal conflict..."¹³¹ He recalled that the history of independent Afghanistan went back more than 2000 years and was far more being finished: "My deepest hope is to speak of freedom restored to Afghanistan by December 1985."¹³² While expressing the hope that the valiant struggle being waged by the people of Afghanistan would bear the fruits of success, the US President said: "we will not forget the people of Afghanistan who are struggling to live once again among the free nations of the world. These brave people will continue to have the support of all Americans in their noble struggle."¹³³

The present day Afghanistan is reeling under terror. The US Congressmen and media have denounced the blatant violation of

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid.

133 Ibid.

human rights by the Russians in Afghanistan. Mark D. Siljander, member of the House of Representatives, said on 18 September 1985 that the "creeping cowardice syndrome" being played by the Russians in Afghanistan has gripped the US foreign policy since Vietnam.¹³⁴

The Congressman Jim Courter has strongly pleaded for supply of US arms and ammunition for the Afghan Mujahideen. He acknowledged the courage of Afghan freedom fighters when he said on 26 September 1985: "The Afghans have never before felt the crush of Red Army occupation. For 6 years now, they have resisted fiercely. Their pride and their religion are two firm guarantees that they wish to continue to do so."¹³⁵ On 8 October 1985, Senator Gordon/Humphrey, moved a resolution (S. Res. 237) in the US Senate which while condemning the Russian violation of human rights in Afghanistan, inter alia envisaged:

- (1) Strongly supports President Reagan's intent to discuss directly with the Soviet leaders American concerns with the Soviet presence in Afghanistan; and
- (2) Calls upon the President to reiterate the desire of the United States to achieve a negotiated political settlement agreeable to all interested parties in Afghanistan, which settlement should include -
 - (A) the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops;
 - (B) the restoration of the independent and nonaligned status of Afghanistan;

¹³⁴ Congressional Record, 99th Congress, First Session, vol. 131, no. 117, p. E 4089.

¹³⁵ Ibid., vol. 131, no. 131, 26 September 1985, p. E 4209.

- (C) self-determination for the Afghan people;
- (D) the return of Afghan refugees with safety and honour. 136

This resolution was passed by the US Senate unanimously on 25 October 1985.

While drawing the attention of the fellow Congressmen to the forthcoming Reagan-Gorbachov Summit meeting held in November 1985, Congressman, Norman D. Shunway told the House on 23 October 1985: "... As we look forward the November summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev, I believe that the plight of Afghanistan should not be pushed to the back of our minds..."¹³⁷

On 31 October 1985, Congressman, Kemp, while introducing an identical resolution, as introduced earlier in the Senate (S. Res. 237) in the House of the Representatives, urged the fellow Congressmen:

... Join us in this resolution to honour the great struggle of the Afghan people and proclaim their right to democracy and self-determination. And let us pray that someday the forces of tyranny will finally be lifted from the earth and all nations under God will respect the sacred and inalienable rights of mankind. 138

On 12 November 1985, the US representative to the UN, while addressing the General Assembly expressed regret over the relentless war waged by "Soviet troops for almost six years

134 Congressional Record - Senate, 99th Congress, First Session, vol. 131, no. 133, 8 October 1985, p. S.12925.

135 Ibid., vol. 131, no. 142, 23 October 1985, p. E.4763.

136 Ibid., vol. 131, no. 148, 31 October 1985, p. H. 9559.

now, against everything in Afghanistan".¹³⁹ He further added that using a combination of military terror on the one hand and psychological manipulation in the form of re-education and indoctrination efforts on the other, "the Soviet forces have tried for six years - longer than the duration of the Second World War - to break the Afghan spirit".¹⁴⁰ While expressing US support for the efforts of the UN Secretary General and latter's personal representative to find a just and viable settlement of Afghan crisis, the US representative said: "The United States is prepared to guarantee a comprehensive and balanced settlement in Afghanistan, consistent with the General Assembly's resolutions and predicated on a complete withdrawal of Soviet troops in a fixed and reasonable length of time."¹⁴¹

On 13 December 1985, both the Senate and the House of Representatives jointly passed a resolution, which inter alia:

- (1) Condemns the six years of aggression waged against the independent country and people of Afghanistan;
- (2) urges expeditious conclusion of a negotiated political settlement based on --
 - (A) the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops;
 - (B) restoration of the independent and nonaligned status of Afghanistan;
 - (C) self-determination for the Afghan people; and
 - (D) the return of the Afghan refugees with safety and honour. ¹⁴²

¹³⁹ UN Doc. A/40/PV.72, 12 November 1985, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 3-5.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Congressional Record - Senate, 99th Congress, First Session, vol. 131, no. 173, 13 December 1985, p. S.17658.

It is evident that the US Congress was seriously seized of the problem of Afghanistan in the wake of Russian aggression on that country. On 14 December 1985, a republished article in the Washington Post quoted the Deputy Secretary of State, John Whitehead, as having said that the US was prepared to play a role in guaranteeing provisions of a ceasefire and Soviet withdrawal in Afghanistan.¹⁴³ In this context, Senator Byrd said on 18 December 1985 that he hoped that the Soviet leadership would take up the US offer and thus end the stalemate over Afghanistan.¹⁴⁴

The US President, Ronald Reagan, in his message on Afghan Day on 21 March 1986, while reiterating his country's support for the Afghan Mujahideen said: "For the heroic Afghan people, it marks the beginning of yet another year in their struggle for national liberation against the ruthless Soviet military force that seeks to conquer them."¹⁴⁵ While paying his tributes to the Afghan freedom fighters, the US President further added that the sacrifices made by them could never be forgotten.¹⁴⁶ The US President also raised the issue during his summit meeting with Soviet leader Gorbachev at Rvkvyk and urged the Soviet Union to resolve the Afghan crisis as soon as possible.¹⁴⁷

143 Jim Anderson, "US Ready for Role in Afghanistan Peace", Washington Post, 14 December 1985.

144. Congressional Record, 99th Congress, First Session, vol. 131, no. 176, p. S.17840.

145 Department of State Bulletin, May 1986.

146 Ibid.

147 New York Times, 9 September 1986.

On 17 September 1986, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, a US representative to the Conference on US-Soviet relations at Riga, Latvia, said that the United States had no special interest in Afghanistan except to see it nonaligned and at peace with itself and with its surrounding neighbours.¹⁴⁸ On 8 October 1986, the US Defence Secretary Weinberger in an interview on ABC Television in Beijing said that the Soviet offer of withdrawal of some of its troops from Afghanistan was only "a deceptive ploy". He further added that the Soviets had sometime ago inserted more troops into Afghanistan so that they could withdraw those same troops and leave their net strength the same.

The Soviet proposal of withdrawing some of its troops from Afghanistan was only a "gimmick" because no exact information was made available about the modus operandi. The Western and other journalists, who were invited to cover the Soviet withdrawal of six regiments from Afghanistan, were kept under tight security and followed a closely monitored schedule.¹⁵⁰ On 30 October 1986, the Director of the US Defence Intelligence Agency while addressing a press conference at the Pentagon said that the United States had clear and convincing evidence that Soviet claims of having withdrawn six regiments were a "sham and deception".¹⁵¹ According to US Defence sources, the Soviet troops strength had only been

148 USICA, Recent Developments in Afghanistan (New Delhi, 1986), p. 11.

149 Ibid., p. 12.

150 Ibid., p. 13.

151 Ibid., p. 15.

reduced by 2,000 and not the 8,000 as claimed by Moscow.¹⁵²

On 31 October 1986, the US President, Reagan, while commenting on the Soviet troop withdrawal accused Moscow of bad faith in its conduct in Afghanistan and added that "phony book-keeping would not end the war".¹⁵³

The US Ambassador to the United Nations, Herbert Okum, in his address to the General Assembly on 6 November 1986 regretted that despite the repeated calls given by the UN General Assembly for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the Soviet Union had not bothered to comply with these resolutions.¹⁵⁴ While denouncing the Soviet military adventures in Afghanistan, the US Ambassador said that the Afghan Mujahideen were giving stiff resistance to Soviet forces. He further added:

The Afghan people will never surrender. The magnitude of the Soviet threat - not only militarily, but for traditional Afghan religious and cultural values -- has forged a unity of purpose among resistance fighters unparalleled in Afghanistan's history. Today, the resistance is cooperating more closely together than ever before joining forces, coordinating attacks, and sharing intelligence and battle techniques.¹⁵⁵

He further said that if Moscow wanted to demonstrate its interest in a political settlement in Afghanistan, what it needed was to only respond to seven General Assembly resolutions which called for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces. While reiterating the US support for the efforts made by the UN

¹⁵² New York Times, 31 October 1986.

¹⁵³ USICA, n. 148, p. 16.

¹⁵⁴ USICA, Background, 6 November 1986, p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

Secretary General and his personal representative in conducting negotiations aimed at achieving a political settlement, the US Ambassador said: "... the United States firmly supports this process. We have made known our willingness, in writing, to play an appropriate guarantor's role with respect to a comprehensive and balanced settlement that protects the legitimate security interests of all concerned."¹⁵⁶

The New York Times in an editorial has questioned the legitimacy of the Soviet backed communist regime in Kabul to speak for the whole of Afghanistan in the UN General Assembly.¹⁵⁷ The editorial further added that there was a powerful case in logic, justice and precedent for seating the Afghan resistance because it spoke for more people and controlled more Afghan territory than the Kabul regime. On 28 November 1986, Samuel Wise, the Deputy Head of the US delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in Vienna said that the Soviet conduct in Afghanistan called into question its commitments to every one of the solemn pledges it made in signing the Helsinki Final Act (1975).¹⁵⁸ The US delegation called upon the Soviet Union to stop genocide in Afghanistan and pave way for the political settlement of Afghan problem.

The US President Ronald Reagan in a statement on 27 December 1986 marking the seventh anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, called upon the Soviet Union to accept

156 Ibid., p. 6.

157 New York Times, 19 November 1986.

158 USICA, n. 148, p. 19.

the necessity for a political solution and self-determination
¹⁵⁹ for the Afghan people. He further said: "If the Soviets truly
 want peace, let them present at Geneva realistic timetable for
 the withdrawal of their troops from Afghanistan."¹⁶⁰ While
 reiterating US support for a negotiated political solution
 to the Afghan tangle, the US President said that the United
 States "will place no barriers in the Soviet's way should they
 decide to negotiate seriously an end to their occupation of
 Afghanistan".¹⁶¹

The United Nations Response

The issue of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has been
 engaging the attention of the United Nations General Assembly
 and Security Council since January 1980.

In the early days of January 1980, a six-Power draft
 resolution was introduced in the Security Council. The draft
 resolution was mildly worded and it avoided "condemnation". It
 merely "deplored the recent armed intervention in Afghanistan"
 which it described as inconsistent with the fundamental principles
 of the UN Charter and it called "for the withdrawal of foreign
 troops from Afghanistan".¹⁶³ The Soviet Union was not referred

159 USICA, Official Text (New Delhi), 30 December 1986, p. 1.

160 Ibid., p. 2.

161 Ibid.

162 These countries were: Bangladesh, Jamaica, Nigeria,
 the Philippines, Tunisia and Zambia.

163 K.P. Saksena, "Afghanistan Conflict and the United
 Nations", International Studies, vol. 19, no. 4,
 October-December 1980, p. 665.

to by name in the entire text of the draft resolution. When the Six-Power draft resolution was put to vote it failed to secure adoption because of the negative vote cast by Soviet Union. The voting pattern was 13 in favour and two against.¹⁶⁴ Consequently another draft resolution sponsored by 24 countries was introduced in General Assembly on 10 January 1980 which was adopted by an overwhelming majority on 14 January 1980. The voting was 104 in favour to 18 against¹⁶⁵ with 18 abstentions. The resolution strongly deplored "recent armed intervention into Afghanistan as inconsistent with a fundamental principle of the Charter" and called for an "immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan in order to enable its people to determine their form of government and choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever".¹⁶⁶ The resolution also called for providing aid to the Afghan refugees through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and also urged the Security Council to consider ways and means to assist in the implementation of the resolution.

On 20 November 1980, the General Assembly again passed

164 Soviet Union and German Democratic Republic (GDR) voted against it.

165 Those who voted against were: Afghanistan, Angola, Bulgaria, Byelorussia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, GDR, Grenada, Hungary, Laos, Mongolia, Mozambique, Poland, the Ukrainian SSR, Soviet Union and Vietnam.

166 General Assembly resolution ES-6/2, 14 January 1980.

resolution against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹⁶⁷ But the second resolution was weak as compared to the first one. It used the phrase "grave concern" instead of "strongly deplores" withdrawal of foreign troops. On 11 February 1981, the then Secretary General of the UN, Kurt Waldheim, appointed Javier Perez de Cuellar, who is the current UN Secretary-General, as his special representative to seek negotiations over political settlement of Afghan issue in the context of the previous resolution passed by the General Assembly.

On 6 November 1981, the Secretary General submitted his report on Afghanistan situation¹⁶⁸ which stated that the special representative of the Secretary General had thrice travelled to Afghanistan and Pakistan on 12-16 April 1981 and 4-9 August 1981 to hold discussions with the senior officials of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The report added that an understanding had been reached in August 1981 on the substantive issues to be negotiated but on their format.¹⁶⁹ The report finally concluded that the approach adopted could facilitate the search for a fair political solution which would ensure that no Afghan people would be able to determine their own destiny, free from foreign intervention and interference.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ UN, Official Records of the General Assembly (hereafter GAOR), Thirty-fifth session, Resolution 35/37, 20 November 1980, p. 17.

¹⁶⁸ UN Doc. A/36/653, 6 November 1981.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

On 18 November 1981, the General Assembly adopted a resolution 36/34 on Afghanistan situation by a recorded vote of 116 to 23 with 12 abstentions.¹⁷¹ The countries which voted against the resolution were mainly the Soviet Union, its allies and client states. The resolution called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and reiterated that preservation of that country's sovereignty and territorial integrity was essential for a peaceful solution of Afghan tangle.¹⁷²

The General Assembly has been continuously seized of the problem of Afghanistan. On 29 November 1982, the General Assembly again adopted a resolution on Afghanistan, which inter alia said:

- (i) Reiterates that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan is essential for a peaceful solution of the problem;
- (ii) Reaffirms the right of Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever;
- (iii) Calls for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan....¹⁷³

Abdul Rahman Pazhwak, a former Afghan diplomat and permanent Afghan representative to the United Nations, in an interview

171 GAOR, Thirty-sixth session, Resolution 36/34, 18 November 1981, p. 18.

172 Ibid.

173 For full text see, USICA, "UN Resolution on Afghanistan", Official Text, 6 December 1982.

with the Voice of America (VOA), which was later published in a Pushtu language paper, urged for more amendments in the UN resolution of 29 November 1982. Referring to "immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan", as envisaged in the UN resolution, Pazhwak said that instead the resolution should have included, "immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of foreign troops".¹⁷⁴ He made various suggestions the incorporation of which could help the speedy solution of the Afghan problem. He laid emphasis on the fact that any solution to Afghan problem could be had only by involving the Afghan Mujahideen.¹⁷⁵ He further emphasized that any solution of Afghan problem without the participation of Afghan Mujahideen would be unacceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

The General Assembly in its resolution of 15 November 1984, called for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan and reiterated that "the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan was essential for a peaceful solution".¹⁷⁶ It also reaffirmed the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside

174 A.R. Pazhwak, "The Basic Way for the Political Solution of Afghan Problem", Afghan Mujahidee (Peshawar), December 1982.

175 Ibid.

176 For text of the resolution see, UN Information Centre, The UN Weekly Newsletter (New Delhi), vol. 35, no. 4, 4 December 1984, p. 1.

intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint.¹⁷⁷ This resolution was adopted by a record vote of 119 in favour to 20 against with 14 abstentions. The resolution also recognized the significance of the initiatives of the Organization of Islamic Conference and the efforts of the movement of non-aligned countries for a political solution. It also called upon all parties concerned to work for the creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety with honour. It also renewed its appeal to all countries and national and international organizations to continue to extend humanitarian relief assistance to Afghan refugees in coordination with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.¹⁷⁸

The General Assembly again passed a resolution in November 1982 with 122 votes in favour and 19 against with 12 abstentions.¹⁷⁹ The similar pattern was repeated in November 1986.¹⁸⁰ The following table reveals the voting pattern.

177 Ibid.

178 Ibid.

179 The UN Weekly Newsletter, 25 November 1985.

180 Ibid., 30 November 1986.

UN General Assembly Voting Patterns

Dates	Votes for	Votes against	Abstentions
January 1980	104	18	18
November 1980	111	22	12
November 1981	116	23	12
November 1982	114	21	13
November 1983	116	20	13
November 1984	119	20	14
November 1985	122	19	12
November 1986	122	19	14

Source: UN Monthly Chronicle 1980-1986

The above table reveals that when the issue of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan came up before the General Assembly in January 1980 it was supported by 104 countries and the number increased with the passage of time reaching upto 122 in November 1986. The number of countries voting against the resolution fluctuated between 18 to 23 and the majority of these countries belong to Soviet bloc.

However the number of abstentions decreased gradually. In January 1980, there were 18 abstentions which declined to 14 in 1986. This shows that majority of the world community is opposed to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Geneva Talks on Afghanistan

The "Geneva talks" is a part of the UN initiative to solve the Afghan tangle.

The Geneva talks to find a political solution to the Afghan question started in June 1982 in pursuance of the resolutions passed by the General Assembly. In the wake of Pakistan's refusal to recognize the Karmal Government in Kabul, the UN Secretary-General and his personal representative, Diego Cordovez, made hectic efforts during 1981-82 to help hold "proximity talks" between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. Diego Cordovez held indirect talks with the representatives of Pakistan and Iran which led to the first round of talks in Geneva in June 1982. Iran refused to take part in the negotiations. There was no outcome of the talks which led to its postponement. However it was agreed that the "proximity talks" veered round four main points: (i) Withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; (ii) Non-interference in the internal affairs of states; (iii) international guarantees of non-interference;¹⁸¹ and (iv) voluntary return of the refugees to their homes.

Soviet Union was a silent observer while Iran preferred to be simply "kept informed". Until the middle of 1983, both Islamabad and Kabul had not relented. The proximity talks held in June 1983 resulted in the preparation of 23-page draft agreement for the consideration of "concerned parties".¹⁸² The

181 UN Doc. A/37/482, 27 September 1982.

182 Munawar Noorani, "Afghanistan Negotiations: Implications for the US of an Impasse", Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Villanova), vol. IX, no.3, Spring 1986, p. 9.

UN Special Representative Diego Cordovez claimed that 95 per cent of the agreement was in hand.¹⁸³ But there was no satisfactory outcome because of the differing opinions among the concerned parties. The fourth round of Geneva talks held in June 1985 also proved a failure.¹⁸⁴ However the eighth round of talks held in Geneva in the beginning of August 1986 was adjourned on 8 August 1986¹⁸⁵ in view of the reported Soviet proposal to "withdraw some troops". Though there has been no substantial outcome so far, but the efforts are being made by the UN Special Representative as well as the "concerned parties" to find a speedy settlement.

The Response of Organization of Islamic Conference

Ever since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) has been seized of the Afghan problem and the OIC has played a prominent role by mobilizing the international public opinion against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It was but natural for the International Islamic Community to express its solidarity with the people of Afghanistan who had been subject to Soviet armed aggression.

The first extraordinary session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers which met in Islamabad, Pakistan, from

183 "An Accord in the Offing", Far Eastern Economic Review (Hong Kong), 9 June 1983, p. 28.

184 New York Times, 28 June 1985.

185 Larry Jagan, "Summit Surprise?", Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), vol. XXI, no. 4, 23 August 1986, p. 1473.

27-29 January 1980 unanimously adopted a resolution 1/EOS which inter alia noted that "the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan constitutes a violation of its independence, and aggression against the liberty of its people and a flagrant violation of all international covenants and norms, as well as a serious threat to peace and security in the region and throughout the world".¹⁸⁶

While condemning the Soviet military aggression against the people of Afghanistan, the resolution denounced and deplored it as a flagrant violation of international laws, norms of the Charter of the UN and the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.¹⁸⁷ It called upon all peoples and Governments throughout the world to "persist in condemning this aggression and denounced it as an aggression against Human Rights and a violation of the freedoms of people, which cannot be ignored".¹⁸⁸ Apart from demanding the "immediate and unconditional" withdrawal of all Soviets stationed in Afghan territories, the Conference reiterated that the Soviet troops should refrain from acts of oppression and tyranny against the people of Afghanistan.¹⁸⁹

The Conference took the bold decision of suspending the membership of Afghanistan in the Organization of the Islamic Conference and urged the member countries to withhold the recognition to the "illegal regime" in Afghanistan and "sever

¹⁸⁶ For full text of the resolution see, UN Doc. A/35/109, 21 February 1980, pp. 16-19.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 18.

diplomatic relations with that country until the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan".¹⁹⁰ It also called upon member countries to envisage through appropriate bodies not to participate "in Olympics Games being held in Moscow in July 1980 unless the Soviet Union in compliance with the call of the UN General Assembly and Islamic Conference, withdraws its troops forthwith from Afghanistan".¹⁹¹

The eleventh conference of Foreign Ministers of Islamic countries held in Islamabad in May 1980 adopted a resolution 19/11 SC on Afghanistan which represented a substantial softening of the January 1980's emergency conference's strong condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The resolution established a ministerial committee comprising Tunisia, Iran and Pakistan empowering them to open negotiations with all parties involved in Afghanistan, including Soviet Union, to solve the Afghan problem.¹⁹² It also called for: "(i) the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops; (ii) recognition of the Afghan people's rights to choose their own form of government and socio-economic - political system; (iii) respect for the independence, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of Afghanistan; and (iv) creation of conditions within that."¹⁹³

190 Ibid.

191 Ibid., p. 19.

192 Cited in Richard P. Cronin, Afghanistan, Soviet Invasion and US Response (Washington, D.C. : Congressional Research Service, 1980), p. 5.

193 Ibid., p. 6.

The OIC has continuously taken up substantial decisions on Afghanistan in its period sessions. The Third Summit Conference of the OIC held at Mecca, Saudi Arabia, from 26-28 January 1981 also adopted a resolution 3/3-0 (IS) on the situation in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁴ The Conference viewed with "grave concern" the continued Soviet military occupation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the consequent impediments "which stand in the way of the Muslim people of Afghanistan to exercise their right to determine their political future according to their will".¹⁹⁵ It strongly urged for the creation of appropriate conditions to enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homeland in safety and honour.¹⁹⁶ The resolution called for increasing all efforts to ensure that "Afghanistan remains an independent and non-aligned state and to enable its people to exercise in all freedom their right to express their will as regards the system of their own choosing."¹⁹⁷

The coordinating meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference held at New York on 10 October 1983 while expressing its serious concern over the deplorable situation in Afghanistan resulting from the fact of the continuing foreign presence in that country, evinced its interest in the "efforts exerted by the Special Envoy of the

194 For full text, see, UN Doc. A/36/138, 31 March 1981, pp. 36-39.

195 Ibid., p. 36.

196 Ibid., p. 38.

197 Ibid.

Secretary-General of the United Nations and by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, with a view to finding a solution for the problem which this strife torn Muslim country [Afghanistan] is experiencing".¹⁹⁸ It further demanded the cessation of the armed intervention by "foreign forces in the internal affairs of their brotherly country, and the retreat of these forces from Afghan territory; and reaffirms right of the Afghan people to adopt a system of government of their choice".¹⁹⁹

The fourteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was held at Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 6 to 10 December 1983 and unanimously adopted a resolution 13/14-P.²⁰⁰ The resolution expressed serious concern over the continued Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and the consequent impediment thereof.

The Islamic Conference in its meeting held at Morocco in early February 1986 again called upon the Soviet Union to vacate its aggression in Afghanistan and also reaffirm the right of the Afghan people to adopt a government of their own choice.²⁰¹

Response by the European Economic Community

The European Economic Committee (EEC) comprising 10 member countries of Western Europe have also taken a serious note of

198 UN Doc. A/36/236, 7 May 1984, p. 3.

199 Ibid., p. 4.

200 For full text see, UN Doc. A/39/133, 19 March 1984, pp. 47-50.

201 The Times (London), 8 February 1986.

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. During its annual meeting the EEC has frequently expressed concern over the continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops,

The Heads of State and Government and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ten members of the EEC, met at Maastricht, the Netherlands, in March 1981. The resolution on Afghanistan passed by this meeting of the EEC noted with grave concern the military operations by Soviet troops against the Afghan people, "who are resisting this external interference".²⁰² The resolution further envisaged EEC's call "for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan to exercise freely their right to self-determination and for Afghanistan thus to return to its traditional status as an independent state, neutral and non-aligned."²⁰³ Similar stance was reiterated by the EEC in 1982²⁰⁴ and 1983.²⁰⁵ It called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and restoration of its nonaligned and independent status.

On 14 May 1984, the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the member countries of the EEC was held in Paris. The meeting adopted a resolution on Afghanistan which reiterated the attachment of the EEC countries to the principles set forth in the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly calling for

202 UN Doc. A/36/153, 30 March 1981.

203 Ibid.

204 New York Times, 28 March 1982.

205 Ibid., 14 May 1983.

the withdrawal of foreign troops, self-determination of the Afghan people, voluntary return of the Afghan refugees and nonalignment being the conditions for an honourable, just and lasting settlement for all the parties involved.²⁰⁶ The EEC also reviewed its appeal to Moscow to embark on that course and to contribute to the efforts undertaken to that end by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.²⁰⁷

While speaking on behalf of the EEC, as well as Spain and Portugal, the representative of Luxembourg told the General Assembly on 12 November 1985 that the large scale Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 was a shock to the international community and "it remains one of the most serious violations of the Charter of the United Nations".²⁰⁸ While expressing concern over the plight of Afghan refugees the Luxembourg's representative further added that "in order that a satisfactory solution to this serious humanitarian problem may be found, it is necessary that the refugees be enabled to return to their native land in dignity and safety".²⁰⁹ In his opinion such an eventuality could be facilitated if the independent and nonaligned status of Afghanistan could be restored and the Afghans were allowed to exercise their right to self-determination.

While alluding to the efforts made by the UN Secretary General and his personal representative with regard to a negotiated settlement of Afghanistan, the representative further

206 UN Doc. A/38/261, 17 May 1983.

207 Ibid.

208 UN Doc. A/40/PV. 71, p. 53.

209 Ibid., p. 58.

observed: "We note with interest the report that they have submitted to the Assembly, which shows that technical progress has been achieved in developing several international instruments. We shall continue to support those mediation efforts and we anticipate that rapid, genuine progress may be achieved, especially towards an agreed timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops."²¹⁰

Response of the Nonaligned Movement

The nonaligned countries were also alarmed over the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. This alarm was manifested in February 1981 when the conference of Foreign Ministers of nonaligned countries was held in New Delhi. The final communique issued after the conference called for a political settlement on the basis of withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of Afghanistan.²¹¹ The communique also referred to the right of Afghan refugees to return to their homes in safety and honour. The conference urged all concerned to work towards such a settlement which would ensure that the Afghan people would determine their own destiny/^{free}from outside interference and which would enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homes.²¹²

The Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned countries which met at Havana from 31 May to 5 June 1982 reiterated the urgent call made at the New Delhi Ministerial

210 Ibid., p. 57.

211 Government of India, Twenty-five Years of the Nonaligned Movement (New Delhi, 1986), vol. 1, p. 507.

212 Ibid.

Conference held in February 1981, for a political settlement of Afghan problem on the basis of withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of Afghanistan.²¹³ The other part of the resolution was similar in words and content as of February 1981.

The final declaration adopted by the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Nonaligned Countries held in New Delhi from 7 to 12 March 1983, viewed the situation in Afghanistan with grave concern. It reiterated the earlier calls given by the NAM Conferences for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.²¹⁴ The Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries expressed their appreciation for the sincere efforts made in the search of a political solution in Afghanistan and extended their support to the constructive steps taken in this regard by the UN Secretary General.²¹⁵ They regarded the discussions through the intermediary of the UN Secretary General as a step in the right direction and urged their continuation with a view to promoting an early political settlement of the problem in conformity with the ideals and principles of the nonaligned movement.²¹⁶

The similar stance was reiterated in the final communique issued after the meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of

213 Ibid., p. 571.

214 Government of India, Twenty-five Years of the Nonaligned Movement (New Delhi, 1986), vol. II, p. 33.

215 Ibid.

216 Ibid.

the nonaligned countries held at New York from 1 to 5 October

1984.²¹⁷ The meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the nonaligned countries which was held at Luanda from 4 to 7 September 1985 had also reiterated the old stand on Afghanistan.²¹⁸

The final communique issued by the meeting of the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the nonaligned countries held at New York on 1 October 1985 while reiterating the earlier stand of the NAM hoped for an early solution of the Afghan tangle.²¹⁹

The Ministerial meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the nonaligned countries which met at New Delhi in April 1986, while reiterating the NAM stand on Afghanistan expressed appreciation for the sincere efforts made in the search for a political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan and extended its full support to the constructive steps taken by the UN Secretary General.²²⁰ It also called on all states to exercise restraint to avoid further endangering the peace and security of the region and to take such steps as would lead to the creation of conditions conducive to stable and harmonious relations among the countries of the region.

The Nonaligned Summit held in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe in September 1986, reiterated its earlier stand on Afghan issue and called for the earlier solution of the Afghan

217 Ibid., pp. 118-19.

218 Ibid., p. 184.

219 Ibid., p. 291.

220 Government of India, Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Nonaligned Countries, New Delhi, April 1986 (New Delhi, 1986), p. 45.

problem. It also appreciated the efforts of the UN Secretary General in this regard and expressed the hope that the solution²²¹ to Afghan problem would soon be achieved.

The foregoing analysis reveals that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 and the continued presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan have been widely condemned by the United States, another Super Power, United Nations, Islamic Community, European Economic Community and the Nonaligned Movement (NAM).

221 New York Times, 14 September 1986.

CONCLUSION

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the continued presence of Soviet troops on Afghan soil since then is unprecedented in the annals of international relations. Afghanistan is an ancient country, whose history dates back to over 5000 years. Since its emergence as a modern political entity about 25 decades back, Afghanistan has been the nerve centre of Super Power rivalry. The geo-strategic location of Afghanistan makes it share border with the Soviet Union. Despite the severe pressures of Anglo-Russian rivalry prior to the Second World War and Soviet-United States (US) rivalry in the post-war period, Afghanistan has always warded off the overtures of Super Powers by pursuing the policy of strict neutrality and genuine nonalignment. Thus, it also managed to safeguard its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Afghanistan had pursued this smooth course for centuries and even the change of regime did not affect the basic tenets of Afghan foreign policy.

However, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 changed the entire course of Afghan history and an independent and nonaligned country became a "satellite of Soviet Empire". The background of Soviet invasion was laid down during the last week of April 1978 when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power, with Soviet help, by overthrowing and simultaneously killing Sardar Mohammad Daoud. Between April 1978 and December 1979, the Soviet military advisers, and troops had started reaching

Afghanistan for a virtual takeover. The PDPA regime had departed from the traditional path of genuine nonalignment and Afghanistan was gradually pushed into the Soviet orbit. The Soviet invasion in the last week of December finally sealed the fate of Afghanistan as an independent and sovereign country. Today's Afghanistan is a client and satellite state of Soviet Union.

The existing norms and practices of international relations and international law as well as the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are opposed to the invasion and occupation of one country by another country. Afghanistan throughout the course of its history has always pursued the policy of strict neutrality and genuine non-alignment. Besides, the pursuit of peace and friendly relations have always been the main bulwark of Afghan foreign policy. It has never harboured territorial designs against any country, especially its neighbours. Rather, Afghanistan had been the victim of foreign aggression, three times by the British and three times by Soviet Union, prior to the Second World War and again by Soviet Union in December 1979.

Even during the heydays of Anglo-Russian rivalry, Afghanistan never fell a prey to either Soviet or British overtures nor it allowed its territory to be used by either side against the other. The Afghan rulers were convinced that they could retain the independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan by pursuing a policy of strict neutrality. Even during its hostilities with the British, Afghanistan never accepted the Soviet help but defended itself with its own

indigenous resources. In the immediate aftermath of the conclusion of the Second World War, the Soviet-US rivalry for winning newly independent countries to their respective "spheres of influence" gave rise to the emergence of cold war which was followed by the founding of military alliances. Afghanistan remained aloof from the power politics of the cold war and did not join any military alliance. It pursued the policy of genuine nonalignment.

In the wake of these developments, the Soviet invasion and its consequent occupation of Afghanistan is very perplexing and unwarranted. There was not even a slightest provocation on the part of Afghanistan which could prompt the Soviets to invade Afghanistan. Moscow for long had been cherishing the goal of reaching the "hot waters" of the Indian Ocean through the Indian subcontinent or through Persian Gulf. The strategic location of Afghanistan was most congenial for Soviet Union to fulfil its centuries old dream. The Soviet action proves that Moscow, for long, had been harbouring territorial designs on Afghanistan and was looking for an opportunity which came in April 1978 and culminated in fulfilling Soviet aspirations in December 1979.

By invading Afghanistan, Soviet Union has violated its bilateral agreements with Afghanistan, violated the principles of the United Nations Charter and defied the world public opinion. But for the December 1978 Soviet Afghan treaty, all earlier treaties signed in 1921 and 1926 between Moscow and Kabul had reiterated Soviet affirmation in the independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. The Treaty of Neutrality

and Non-aggression signed between Moscow and Kabul on 31 August 1926 enjoined upon both the countries to maintain neutrality in case either of them was involved in a military conflict with a third country. It also provided that both countries would refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of each other. Before the advent of communist regime in Kabul in April 1978, the Afghan policy towards Russia had been based on good neighbourliness, mutual respect, and principles of peaceful coexistence. This policy was vigorously pursued by different regimes in Afghanistan. All the joint statements and joint communiques issued by the two countries prior to April 1978 had reiterated the faith of two countries in these principles. The Afghan-Soviet friendship treaty signed on 5 December 1978 envisaged under Article IV that both countries sought continually to develop cooperation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreements and also provided for consultations between the two countries and for the initiation of appropriate measures by mutual consent to ensure their security, independence and territorial integrity.¹ It was under the pretext of this clause that the Soviets justified their invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviets claimed that they had been "invited" by the Kabul regime to defend Afghanistan against the "foreign intervention". It is worth noting that the advent of the Soviet-backed communist government in Kabul in April 1978 was followed by exodus of Afghans opposed to the communist takeover from Afghanistan into neighbouring Pakistan and Iran. The people

1 For full text of the treaty see, Soviet Review (New Delhi), vol. 15, no. 58, 21 December 1978, pp. 31-34.

of Afghanistan also organized themselves into resistance groups to launch armed struggle against the Soviet occupation. Thus the Russian backed communist regime in Kabul was almost near collapse and Moscow also saw an opportunity to fulfil its long-cherished ambition of reaching the hot waters of the Indian Ocean by occupying Afghanistan. Consequently the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in the last week of December 1979 using the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of 1978 as a pretext.

The resolutions passed by the General Assembly have called for the immediate and total withdrawal of "foreign troops" from Afghanistan. But the Soviet Union has not cared to comply with those resolutions which are only recommendatory in nature. Moscow, being the permanent member of the Security Council, has already vetoed a resolution on Afghanistan on 7 January 1980 and can veto any such resolution which it deems detrimental to its interests. However in General Assembly where Moscow cannot influence every member, has passed several resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and even condemned the Soviet invasion on Afghanistan. This shows that the Soviet action in Afghanistan is in utter violation of the principles of the UN Charter and has dared to be unconcerned about what the General Assembly has called for.

Besides, the Soviet Union has also shown utter disregard for the international public opinion. The Soviet invasion and continued occupation of Afghanistan has been widely condemned by the nonaligned Summit Conferences held in New Delhi in 1983 and at Harare in 1986, by the Organization of Islamic

Countries, European Economic Community (EEC) and other regional organizations like ASEAN, Arab League, OPEC etc. The salient points common to the resolutions passed by these organizations have called for the immediate and total withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the return of the Afghan refugees to their homes with honour and dignity and the restoration of the independent and nonaligned status of Afghanistan. All such urgings and appeals have fallen flat on Soviet ears.

Under the contemporary international relations, act of one Super Power can be counterbalanced by the other Super Power. After all the countries of the Third World have been the victim of the Super Power rivalry which threatens their existence. The United States can definitely help in entangling the Afghan knot. The reaction of Washington to the developments in Kabul between April 1978 and December 1979 had been lukewarm. The Carter Administration also took time in imposing US sanctions against the Soviet Union. However, the US was itself engaged in the US hostages' affair in Iran during that period. These sanctions were softened by the Reagan Administration.

The advent of diplomatic relations between Kabul and Washington^{dates} back to early 1940s but efforts in this direction were initiated as early as the second half of the second decade of the present century. The lukewarm US response to the Afghan endeavours to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries during 1920s and 1930s did not deter Kabul which continuously availed every opportunity to convince the policy makers in Washington of Afghanistan's anxiety and eagerness to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and the United States in 1942 coincided with the zenith of the Second World War. The United States was involved in the war. However, Afghanistan maintained the policy of strict neutrality throughout the period of Second World War. The Afghan policy of strict neutrality during the war period was highly appreciated by the Allied powers especially in United States.

The post-Second World War period witnessed the growth of cordial and friendly relations between Kabul and Washington. Afghanistan got economic and technical assistance from the United States which proved helpful in the economic and industrial development. In the wake of the onset of cold war hotly chased by the United States and Soviet Union to win over the newly independent countries to their respective "spheres of influence", Afghanistan pursued a genuinely nonaligned policy and maintained an independent posture in international affairs. Keeping in view the cold war situation and Afghanistan's proximity to Soviet Union, the United States failed to properly appreciate the geo-political significance of Afghanistan for US strategy. The US foreign policy under Dulles ignored Afghanistan. Afghanistan's requests for US arms during 1950s were also ignored. Moscow seized this opportunity to win Afghan favour by providing increased economic aid especially after mid 1950s. This does not mean that Afghanistan abandoned its traditional policy of genuine nonalignment and toed the Soviet line. But more enlightened US foreign policy during the Dulles period could have made Afghanistan less dependent on Soviet Union for economic and military assistance.

The Afghanistan-US relations thrived uninterruptedly since the beginning of early 1940s till the advent of Russian-backed communist coup in Kabul in April 1978 on the basis of mutual respect for each other, non-interference and peaceful coexistence. The United States provided substantial economic and technical assistance to Afghanistan during this period. There had been exchange of visits by the leaders of the two countries. Both countries shared common views on global and regional issues. Afghanistan had great admiration for US role in maintaining international peace and security while the United States greatly valued Afghanistan's policy of genuine non-alignment.

However the lukewarm reaction by the United States to the advent of pro-Moscow communist regime in Kabul in April 1978 allowed the developments to take a decisive turn in December 1979 when Soviets invaded Afghanistan. A stern action in the form of diplomatic and economic sanctions against Moscow and stern warning to Moscow not to interfere into the internal affairs of Afghanistan could have prevented Soviet Union from invading Afghanistan in December 1979.

In the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter Administration took belated measures by imposing sanctions against the Soviet Union and warning the latter to "keep hands off from the Persian Gulf". By the time US sanctions were announced, the tens of thousands of Russian troops had entrenched their position in Afghanistan. An early and immediate strong action by Carter Administration could have saved the situation from further deterioration.

However, the United States under Reagan Administration has rendered valuable humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan in their just struggle against Soviet invasion. Washington has condemned the Soviet act of aggression in the United Nations and its consistent stand on Afghan issue has helped in boosting the morale of Afghan freedom fighters.

Though United States has rendered diplomatic and humanitarian assistance to the Afghan Mujahideen, yet this alone is not sufficient to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. The US should take more tough stand in the United Nations and other international fora against the Soviet Union so that the latter should realize that its action in Afghanistan would strain its relations with the United States. Besides, the Reagan Administration should give direct economic and other types of assistance to Afghan Mujahideen and not through any third party. It is worth mentioning here that it was the tough stand of Washington ^{Moscow} which compelled/to withdraw its troops from Iran in 1946. The Soviet Union should be made to realize that it would not be allowed to usurp Afghanistan. The US should re-impose severe diplomatic and economic sanctions against Soviet Union in order to pressurize Moscow to vacate the aggression in Afghanistan.

Another hope of defusing the Afghanistan crisis is the United Nations. Afghanistan is one of the founding members of the UN. It has played very active and constructive role in strengthening the world body. The moral support rendered by Afghanistan to the United Nations in tackling the crucial global issues has been instrumental in consolidating the constructive role of the world body in maintaining international peace and

security. But when one of its members - Afghanistan - has been invaded by another powerful member - Soviet Union - the world body has failed in discharging its basic duty of safeguarding the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan.

The First resolution passed by the General Assembly in January 1980 condemned the Soviet Union by name for invading Afghanistan and called for the "withdrawal of Soviet troops" from Afghan soil. But the subsequent resolutions passed by the General Assembly beginning with December 1980 resolution became mild in their condemnation of Soviet Union and called for the "withdrawal of foreign troops" from Afghanistan. It seems that Moscow succeeded in influencing the functioning of the General Assembly which is reflected in the softening tone of UN resolutions on Afghanistan. If such a state of affairs is allowed to continue the faith of the countries in the UN would be eroded.

The resolutions so far passed by the General Assembly suffer from many weaknesses. In the first instance, the invader (Soviet Union) is not mentioned by name. The Soviet troops are stationed on Afghan soil and the reference in the resolution to "withdrawal of foreign troops" defeats the very purpose of the resolutions. Instead, reference should be made to "immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan".²

2 A.R. Pazhwak, "Basic Way for the Political Solution of Afghan Problem", Afghan Mujahid (Peshawar), Special Issue, no. 18, December 1982.

Secondly, though the resolutions passed by the General Assembly have recognized that Afghan problem is of political nature and it needs political solution, yet all the belligerent parties have not been invited for the negotiations. The communist regime in Kabul does not represent the entire population of Afghanistan but only the minority government backed by Moscow. More than one third of Afghan population are living as refugees in Pakistan, Iran and other countries, and the Afghan Mujahideen represent all Afghan people. Hence, the Afghan Mujahideen should be represented in the United Nations and not the pro-Moscow regime in Kabul. Thus the resolutions passed by the General Assembly do not reflect the genuine aspirations of the people of Afghanistan.

Soviet Union being a Super Power and one of the founding members of the United Nations owes a greater responsibility to abide by the principles of the UN Charter and safeguard the interests of the world body. Besides being the permanent member of the Security Council, it devolves on Moscow a special responsibility to see that the resolutions passed by the Security Council are implemented in letter and spirit. Paradoxically, Soviet Union has defied the basic principles of the UN by invading Afghanistan, a fellow member and misused its veto power to conceal its own political misadventurism.

The resolutions passed so far by the General Assembly have asked for the withdrawal of "foreign troops" and do not mention the withdrawal of "Soviet troops" from Afghanistan. It seems that Moscow has used pressure tactics to influence the

resolutions of the General Assembly. Besides, the resolutions have also failed to mention clearly the inalienable rights of the people of Afghanistan to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their homeland which has been jeopardized in the wake of Russian aggression.

The resolutions passed by the General Assembly have not condemned Russia as an aggressor by name. Besides, these resolutions are not asking for "complete, unconditional and immediate" withdrawal of Russian troops.³

There is also no objection to the representation of the Soviet backed communist regime in Kabul in the UN in these resolutions. The resolutions passed by the General Assembly recognize that the question of Afghanistan needs a political solution. Any negotiations designed to seek the solution of political nature involves the participation of all belligerent sides. However the UN resolutions have failed to provide a belligerent status to the representatives of the Afghan Mujahideen in the Geneva Talks.⁴ The Afghan Mujahideen are fighting against the Russian aggression. These freedom fighters represent the bulk of Afghan population. Any resolution seeking political settlement of Afghanistan without the participation of Afghan Mujahideen would be unacceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

Apart from this, the UN resolutions have referred to "safeguarding security, national sovereignty, independence and

3 A.R. Pazhwak's statement quoted in Afghan Mujahid, Special Issue, no. 2, 1 April 1983.

4 Ibid.

territorial integrity of Afghanistan". In reality, the resolutions should ask for the "restoration of all rights" of the people of Afghanistan which have been curbed and violated in the wake of Russian aggression. After having restored all the rights of Afghan people, then only the question of preservation of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan should be taken up.⁵

The incorporation of these basic points is very essential and they form the basis of "restoration" "safeguarding" and preservation of national interest of Afghanistan. Any arrangements without the inclusion of these provisions would not be acceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

Thus it devolves on the UN General Assembly to provide representation to the representative of the Afghan Mujahideen who are the sole, legitimate and true representative of the people of Afghanistan, to present the Afghan case. Any resolution adopted by the General Assembly seeking the political solution of Afghanistan problem without the participation of Afghan Mujahideen would not be acceptable to the people of Afghanistan. And such arrangement would be unjust and unimplementable.

The hopes raised by the Geneva Talks have also been belied. In 1981 the General Assembly had asked the UN Secretary General to hold talks with Soviet Union, communist regime in Kabul, Pakistan and Iran to explore the possibility of finding a political solution to Afghanistan problem. In early 1982,

5 Ibid.

the UN Secretary General appointed the UN Under-Secretary General, Cordovez, as his Special Representative, to hold talks with the concerned parties. This has come to be known as "Geneva Talks". The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General have held seven round of talks with the representatives of Kabul regime and Pakistan while Iran has been kept informed about the ongoing progress made in the talks.

The UN Secretary General in his report on Geneva Talks⁶ submitted to the General Assembly on 7 October 1986 said that in May 1986 an understanding was reached at between Kabul and Islamabad that the political settlement should consist of a set of instruments that would include a bilateral agreement on non-interference and non-intervention, a declaration on international guarantees; a bilateral agreement on the voluntary return of the refugees and an instrument that would set out the inter-relationship between the aforementioned instruments and the solution of the question of the withdrawal of foreign troops in accordance with an agreement to be concluded between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union.

However, the possibility of such an agreement to be accepted by the Afghan Mujahideen is very remote because they are not represented in the Geneva Talks. Neither the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General nor the other countries party to the talks have ever bothered to ascertain the standpoint of Afghan Mujahideen. Any agreement with regard to Afghanistan without the participation of Afghan Mujahideen

6 UN Doc. A/40/709.

would not be acceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

The emphasis in UN resolutions and the Geneva Talks is on the withdrawal of "foreign troops" and the international guarantees of non-interference and non-intervention into Afghanistan. The Soviet Union and the communist regime in Kabul which is surviving on Moscow's support, have relegated the issue of withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan to a secondary place by laying stress on international guarantees. It is clear that Moscow and its puppet regime in Kabul have been overawed by the stiff resistance put up by the Afghan freedom fighters. Thus their pretext of international guarantees is nothing but a ploy to thwart the endeavours of the Afghan Mujahideen. Pakistan or any other country is not supporting in any way the Afghan freedom fighters. They are fighting themselves with their own resources. And though the United States has offered to give "international guarantee" but the Soviet Union has neither accepted the US guarantee nor is willing to withdraw its troops from the Afghan soil. The United States and other permanent members of the UN Security Council should impress upon the Soviet Union to secure a guarantee from Moscow to immediately withdraw its troops from Afghanistan unconditionally under the auspices of the Security Council. The basic crux of the whole issue is the unconditional, immediate and complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The only pressing problem is the presence of Russian troops in Afghanistan. Once the invading forces are withdrawn, the Afghan refugees would automatically return to their homeland. It is a humanitarian issue which is the outcome of Russian invasion. The independent

and nonaligned status of Afghanistan should also be restored immediately.

The Geneva Talks were initiated after having acknowledged the fact that Afghan problem is of political nature and it needs a "political solution". Thus, it warranted the participation of all belligerents as equal parties in the negotiations. Like General Assembly resolutions, the Geneva Talks have ignored the participation of the Afghan Mujahideen as the sole legitimate representative of the people of Afghanistan. When none of the belligerents -- Russia as an invader and the Afghan freedom fighters as a defender are represented, then the very purpose of Geneva Talks becomes self-defeating.

The problem of a political nature needs a political solution. The negotiations concluded in this regard call for the equal representation of all belligerent groups concerned with a view to provide legitimacy and acceptability to such a solution under the existing norms and principles of international law and diplomacy. The mere consultations or proximity talks between puppet government in Kabul and other non-belligerents without the participation of Afghan Mujahideen have rendered Geneva Talks as infructuous and thus unacceptable to the people of Afghanistan.

From the Soviet side, the participation of Kabul regime in Geneva Talks, which does not have any independent status in negotiations but to support Soviet Union, is advantageous to Moscow.⁷ Such a move also helps the Soviets to be absolved of

⁷ A.R. Pazhwak in an interview with Afghan Mujahid, 1 April 1983.

any responsibility. The Afghan Mujahideen are the true representatives of the people of Afghanistan and not the communist government in Kabul.

Besides, even if the base for participation in Geneva Talks is the neighbours of Afghanistan, then all the neighbours are not represented in Geneva Talks. Only Pakistan is represented while Iran is only kept informed. This criterion is also invalid⁸ because all neighbours are not involved in the negotiations.

Secondly, if the base or criterion is the Islamic countries, then only two Islamic countries -- Pakistan and Iran -- are involved. While Pakistan is participating in the proximity talks, Iran is only "kept informed". Islamic countries numbering over forty have neither been consulted nor participants to the Geneva Talks. This renders it as invalid.

Furthermore, if the base is regarded the presence of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, the Afghan refugees are present in the other countries as well. The refugee problem is a humanitarian issue which has emerged because of Russian invasion. The Soviet emphasis on Afghan refugee problem being of humanitarian nature is only a diversion from the basic issue which is of political nature. Moscow wants to mislead the international public opinion by such diversions. Thus, there is a dire need to be cautious of Soviet manoeuvres and not to be misled by it.

Besides, if the base of participation in Geneva Talks is political parties, then only one party - the People's

⁸ Ibid.

Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) which is in power in Kabul with Soviet help / ^{should not be} represented in the talks? There are several other political parties in Afghanistan who should be equally represented. It is well known that when PDPA seized power in Kabul in April 1978 with the help of Soviet Union, the entire Afghan nation stood in revolt against it. The massive number of over five million Afghans who are living in Pakistan, Iran and other countries is a testimony to the fact that the people of Afghanistan are opposed to the present pro-Moscow communist regime and the presence of Soviet army on Afghan soil. Thus the PDPA is not the true representative of the people of Afghanistan. Its very representation in the Geneva Talks is against the accepted norms of international law.

The question of Afghanistan is absolutely and purely a political question of Russian invasion. Its only solution is the vacation of Russian aggression. The first condition for the political solution of Afghan problem is the unconditional, complete and immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This also entails the complete and immediate withdrawal of Soviet non-military personnel, Warsaw Pact forces, dismantling of Soviet military bases and its propaganda machinery ¹⁰ in Afghanistan.

Then follows the restoration of complete independence, national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the nonaligned status of Afghanistan. This is the basic and inalienable right

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

of the people of Afghanistan to select their own political, economic, social and cultural system without any outside¹¹ interference or intervention.

All these above mentioned bases are recognized under international law and all nations should respect and honour them. Thus, it devolves on every country to support the cause of Afghan people to help resolving the present crisis.

However, it is ironical that the response of the nonaligned movement (NAM) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has been very mild to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been the oldest nonaligned country. It has played a pivotal role in founding the NAM and furthering its cause. Afghanistan played a significant role in the Asian Relations Conference and the Bandung Conference. Afghanistan's role in the nonaligned summit conferences since Belgrade (1961) to Colombo (1976) has been commendable. Following the advent of pro-Moscow communist regime in Kabul in April 1978, the non-aligned status of Afghanistan was eroded because it was represented in the Sixth NAM Summit at Havana in 1979 where it endorsed the Cuban thesis that Soviet Union was the "natural ally" of the nonaligned countries. According to A.R. Pazhwak, the participation of Noor Mohammad Taraki as the leader of Afghanistan at the Havana summit was a "severe blow to the NAM¹² as well as to Afghanistan".

11 Ibid.

12 Interview with A.R. Pazhwak, 6 February 1986.

The New Delhi NAM Summit (1983) and the eighth NAM summit held at Harare (1986) have also failed to assuage the aspirations of the Afghans. The resolutions adopted by the New Delhi NAM summit and the Harare summit on Afghanistan have been ambiguous and very mild. The failure of the NAM to condemn the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is a severe blow to the basic principles of the nonaligned movement. Today a nonaligned Afghanistan has been the object of Soviet aggression, tomorrow other nonaligned countries would be the target of Soviet expansionism. The best course for the NAM would have been to oust the representative of the present Kabul regime and a representative of the Afghan Mujahideen would have been represented. Besides, the NAM should have condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in strongest terms. Emphasis could have been laid on the restoration of the nonaligned status of Afghanistan.

The Organization of Islamic Conference in its meeting in 1980 took a commendable step by expelling the Communist Government of Afghanistan from the membership of the OIC and adopted a strong resolution on Afghanistan. However, the subsequent resolutions adopted by the OIC became mild in their criticism of Soviet Union. After having expelled the communist representative of the DRA, the OIC should have initiated the representative of the Afghan Mujahideen to represent Afghanistan. Besides, the Islamic countries should impose severe diplomatic and economic sanctions against Moscow until the latter withdraws its forces from Afghanistan.

Besides, the Nonaligned Summit Conferences, Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and other international forums should¹³ amend the weak points of their resolutions on Afghanistan as suggested supra. This will reflect the strong disapproval of the Soviet action in Afghanistan by the international public opinion and will also be an expression of solidarity with the people of Afghanistan.

Under the prevailing circumstances the member countries of NAM, Islamic Community and United Nations should suggest and support the convening of an international conference on¹⁴ Afghanistan. This conference on Afghanistan should be held under the auspices of the United Nations in which all the permanent members of the Security Council and the representatives of all the political parties of Afghanistan, including the Communist Party of Afghanistan as a political party, should be¹⁵ invited. This conference should work out a concrete and effective programme to ensure the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of all Soviet troops, advisers and civilian personnel from Afghanistan.

After having the most urgent task of the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan been achieved, then the complete independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and nonaligned status of Afghanistan should be restored. The people of Afghanistan should be allowed, without

¹³ A.R. Pazhwak's interview with Mujahid Wollas (Norway),
No. 54, 21 April 1986.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

any outside interference or intervention, to decide their own political, economic and social system keeping in consonance with the Afghan traditions. The Afghan Mujahideen should also unite themselves by sinking their differences and form a Government in exile. A Loya Jirgah or Parliament should be formed which should include the people living inside Afghanistan, Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, Iran, USA, Europe and other parts of the world and the Afghan freedom fighters. The Loya Jirgah should then select a "Council" and develop¹⁶ "a political personality", which should work as Afghan Government in exile. Then all freedom loving countries of the world should accord recognition to Afghan Government in exile. This will help in giving legitimacy to the struggling people of Afghanistan in their cause in the United Nations, Islamic Community, NAM and other international forums. Besides it will be an effective and legitimate instrument to seek the speedy solution of Afghan question more effectively.

16 A.R. Pazhwak's interview with Mujahid Wollas (Norway), No. 57, 24 July 1986.

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Appendix A

AMIR AMANULLAH KHAN OF AFGHANISTAN TO PRESIDENT
HARDING

To My GREAT FRIEND MR. PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA :

Expressing my friendly feeling to Your Excellency, I intend to inform Your Excellency's high Government about my coronation.

After the tragic death of my father His Majesty Amir Habibullah Khan who was killed during His Royal Territorial excursion, I cam to the throne of Afghanistan, as it was my right and all public desire of Afghan nation.

For the expression of friendly feelings of my Government, I sent one of my Generals G. Mohammed Wali Khan as Extraordinary Ambassador to Your Excellency's high Government.

As I used to have the sincere wish to establish a permanent friendly relation between Afghanistan and high Government of the United States, I expect that Your Excellency's High Government may be satisfied with the keeping of this friendly relation too.

Sending to Your Excellency my sincere greeting I beg to express herewith to Your Excellency and Your Excellency's high Government my highest esteem.

AMIR AMANULLAH KHAN

PRESIDENT HARDING TO AMIR AMANULLAH KHAN
OF AFGHANISTAN

GREAT AND GOOD FRIEND : I have received from the hands of G. Mohammed Wali Khan, the letter by which Your Majesty advised me of the death of your father, his late Majesty Amir Habibullah Khan, and of your ascension to the throne of Afghanistan, as well as of your desire to establish diplomatic relations between the United States and Afghanistan.

While I have learned with sorrow of the tragic death of Your Majesty's father, and offer to you my sincere sympathy in this great affliction, I congratulate your Majesty on your ascension to the throne and trust that your reign will rebound to your Majesty's glory and the prosperity of Afghanistan.

It is my wish that the relations between the United States and Afghanistan may always be of a friendly character and I shall be happy to cooperate with your Majesty to this end. I am constrained, however, to confirm to your Majesty what was stated orally to G. Mohammed Wali Khan, that with respect to the United States the question of the creation of a Diplomatic Mission and of the appropriate action to that end by the Congress of the United States must be reserved for future consideration.

In thanking Your Majesty for your friendly sentiments, I desire to assure you of my good wishes for your personal happiness and for the prosperity of your country.

Your Good Friend

Warren G. Harding

Washington, July 29, 1921.

Source: US, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1921, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936), pp. 260-61.

Appendix B

AFGHANISTAN-SOVIET UNION TREATY : 28 February 1921

With the intention of strengthening the friendly relations existing between Russia and Afghanistan and to protect the real independence of Afghanistan, F.S.F.S.R. on the one hand, and His Majesty's Government of Afghanistan on the other, decided to make the following Treaty themselves. And to this end they have appointed as their plenipotentiaries the following:

For His Majesty's Government of Afghanistan:

Mohammed Vali Khan, Mirza Mohammad Khan and
Gholam Seddigh Khan ;

For the R.S.F.S. Government of Russia :

Georgy Vassilievich Chicherin, and Lev
Mikhailovich Kara Khan.

These plenipotentiaries have agreed as follows:

- I. Each of the High Contracting Parties recognizes the independence of the other and undertakes to respect it and enter into proper political relations with the other.
- II. Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes not to enter into any military and political agreement with a third government that may be against the interest of the other of the High Contracting Parties.
- III. The legations and consulates of the High Contracting Parties will equally and respectively possess the customary and international political privileges.

First explanation of the above : (a) the right to fly a government flag.

(b) The immunity of the listed members of the legations and consulates.

(c) The immunity of political despatches and of courier services and any mutual assistance in this connection.

(d) The right of telegraphic, telephonic and wireless communications, in accordance with the privileges of diplomatic representatives.

(e) The legation and consular buildings of each of the High Contracting Parties on the territory of the other will possess extraterritorial privileges, but cannot become an asylum for those persons who are considered outlaws by the local government.

Second explanation: The legations of the High Contracting Parties will each have a military attache.

IV. The High Contracting Parties agree that the R.S.F.S. Government of Russia will have five consulates in the territory of Afghanistan and His Majesty's Government of Afghanistan will have seven consulates in the Russian territory including five consulates in Russian Middle Asia.

Explanation : The High Contracting Parties will be free to open other consulates in the territory of each other, in addition to the number mentioned above, after special agreement.

V. The Russian consulates will open in the towns of Herat, Mezar-i-Sherif, Kandhar, Kaznein and Meimeneh. The Consulate General of Afghanistan will be opened at Tashkent, and the consulates in Petrograd, Kazau, Khokand, Samarkand, Merv, and Krashavodsk.

Explanation: The manner and the time of the actual opening of the Russian consulates in Afghanistan and the Afghan consulates in Russia will be fixed according to a special agreement in each instance.

VI. Russia consents to free and uninterrupted transit of all goods going to Afghanistan from Russia including goods brought in Russia through governmental departments as well as those bought abroad direct.

VII. The High Contracting Parties agree to respect the freedom of the nations in the East on the basis of plebiscity and self-government.

VIII. In accordance with Article VII of the present document the High Contracting Parties recognize the independence and freedom of the Government of Bukhara and Khiva under any form of government that may be desired by their nationals.

IX. In order to accomplish the promise given by the R.S.F.S. Government of Russia through its President, Mr. Lenin, to the Minister of His Majesty's Government of Afghanistan, which promise being to the effect that the Government of Russia agrees to return to Afghanistan all the lands situated in the frontier zone, and which had belonged to Afghanistan in the past century, it is hereby agreed that a separate agreement will be signed by the plenipotentiaries of the High Contracting Parties on the basis of the plebiscite of the nationals living in those lands.

X. In order to further the friendly relations existing between the High Contracting Parties, the R.S.F.S. Government of Russia undertakes to give material and financial assistance to the Government of Afghanistan.

XI. This Treaty is written in Persian and Russian texts, each of which shall have equal validity.

XII. This Treaty will become effective after it is ratified by the respective Governments of the High Contracting Parties, and the exchange of ratifications will take place in Kabul.

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Source: Leonard Shapiro (ed.), Soviet Treaty Series, 1917-1928, Vol. I (Washington, D.C. : The Georgetown University Press, 1950), pp. 96-97.

Appendix C

AFGHAN-SOVIET TREATY OF NEUTRALITY AND
NON-AGGRESSION 1926

The Government of U.S.S.R. and the exalted Government of Afghanistan, with the object of confirming the friendly relations, and of strengthening the neighbourly ties which fortunately exist and on the basis of the Treaty signed in Moscow on 28 February 1921 - said Treaty to preserve its force in all its parts, irrespective of the continuance or cancellation of the present Treaty - both exalted Parties have authorized : His Excellency Mr. Leonid Stark, Minister Plenipotentiary of U.S.S.R. in Afghanistan and His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Beg Khan Tarzi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the exalted Government of Afghanistan, who ... with the object of strengthening the friendly relations and insuring the peace between the two Governments, have framed and signed the Articles below:

- I. In case of war or military action between one of the Contracting Parties and one or more third powers, the other contracting Party undertakes to observe neutrality towards the first Party.
- II. Each of the Contracting Parties undertakes to abstain from all kinds of aggression against the other and will not, on the territory under its own occupation, take any such steps which may cause political or military injury to the other contracting Government. In particular, each of the Contracting Parties undertakes not to join any other state or states in any political or military alliance or union directed against the other.

In addition, should the ~~policy~~ of a third state or states be hostile in its action to either of the Contracting Parties, the other Contracting Party shall undertake not only to abstain from assisting such hostile policy, but also to prevent the said policy and hostile actions and their inception within its own territory.

III. The High Contracting Parties, mutually recognizing the sovereignty and integrity of the other, undertake to abstain from all kinds of armed and unarmed interference in the internal affairs of the other Contracting Party and also not join or assist any other state or states which may take steps against or interfere with the other contracting state.

The Contracting Parties will not permit any groups or individuals in their own territories to establish or to prosecute activities detrimental to the other Contracting Party; to take steps for the subversion of the established Government of the other Contracting state; to take any action against the integrity of the territory of the other Contracting Party; to mobilize or collect armed forces against the other Contracting Party; and will prevent them from taking said actions. Similarly the Parties will not countenance the transit through their territories of any armed forces, arms, firearms, ammunition or the supply of any kind of war materials intended for use against the other Contracting Party and likewise will take active steps to prevent the same from passing through its territory.

IV. The Contracting Parties agree that within four months they will enter into discussions to determine principles for the solution of differences which may arise between them,

which cannot be settled through the ordinary diplomatic channels.

V. Each of the Contracting Parties outside the limits of undertakings the conditions of which are defined in this Treaty, has freedom of action in taking steps to form any kind of relations and any kind of agreement with other states.

VI. This Treaty will have the force of law and will remain in force for three years following the date of ratification which should take place within three months following the date of signature of the present Treaty. After the expiration of the said period it will be understood that the Treaty will continue in force for an additional year automatically unless either of the Contracting Parties has notified the other that it desires to terminate the enforcement of this Treaty six months before the expiration of that period.

VII. Two copies of this Treaty have been written in Persian and in Russian and both texts will have equal force.

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Source: Leonard Shapiro, Soviet Treaty Series, 1917-1928, Vol. I (Washington, D.C. : The Georgetown University Press, 1950), pp. 322-23.

Appendix D

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN IN REGARD TO
FRIENDSHIP, DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR REPRESENTATION,
JURIDICAL PROTECTION AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS : 1935

- I. There shall be a firm and enduring peace and sincere friendship between the United States of America and its citizens and His Majesty, the King of Afghanistan, his successors and subjects, throughout all their territories and possessions.
- II. The diplomatic representatives of each country shall enjoy in the territories of the other, the privileges and immunities derived from generally recognized international law. The consular representative of each country, duly provided with ~~exequatur~~, will be permitted to reside in the territories, they shall enjoy the honorary privileges and the immunities accorded to such officers by general international usage; and they shall not be treated in a manner less favourable than similar officers of any other foreign country.
- III. Subjects of His Majesty, the King of Afghanistan in the United States of America, its territories and possessions, and the nationals of the United States of America, its territories and possessions, in the King of Afghanistan shall be received and treated in accordance with the requirements and practices of generally recognized international law. In respect of their persons, possessions and rights, they shall enjoy the fullest protection of the

laws and authorities of the country, and they shall not be treated in regard to their persons, property, rights and interests, in any manner less favourable than the nationals of any other foreign country.

IV. In respect of import, export and other duties and charges affecting commerce, as well as in respect of transit warehousing and other facilities, the United States of America, its territories and possessions, will accord to the Kingdom of Afghanistan, and the King of Afghanistan will accord to the United States of America, its territories and possessions, unconditional most-favoured nation treatment. Every concession with respect to any duty, change of regulation, affecting commerce now accorded or that may hereafter be accorded by the United States of America, its territories and possessions, or by the Kingdom of Afghanistan to any foreign country will become immediately applicable without request and without compensation to the commerce of the Kingdom of Afghanistan and of the United States of America, its territories and possessions respectively.

V. The stipulations of this agreement shall not extend to the treatment which is accorded by the United States of America to the commerce of Cuba under the provisions of the Commercial Convention concluded between the United States and Cuba on December 11, 1902 or the Reciprocal Trade Agreement concluded on August 24, 1929, or the provisions of any other Commercial Convention, which hereafter may be concluded between the United States of

America and Cuba. Such stipulations, moreover, shall not extend to the treatment which is accorded to the commerce between the United States of America and the Panama Canal Zone or any of the dependencies of the United States of America or to the commerce of the dependencies of the United States of America with one another under existing or future laws.

Nothing in this agreement shall be construed as a limitation of the right of either Government to impose, on such terms as it may see fit, prohibitions or restrictions of a sanitary character designed to protect human, animal or plant life or regulations for the enforcement of police or revenue laws.

Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to affect existing statutes of either country in relation to the immigration of aliens or the rights of either Government to enact such statutes.

- VI. The present stipulations shall become operative on the day of signature thereof and shall remain respectively in effect until the entry into force of a definitely treaty of commerce, or until thirty days after notice of their termination shall have been given by the Government of either country but should the Government of the United States of America be prevented by future action of its legislature from carrying out the terms of these stipulations, the obligations thereof shall thereupon lapse.

VII. In witness whereof the undersigned, duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this agreement, in duplicate, at Paris this day of one thousand nine hundred and thirtyfive.

Source: United States, Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1935 (Washington, D.C. : Government Printing Office, 1953), pp. 557-59.

Appendix B

THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, GOOD NEIGHBOURLINESS
AND COOPERATION, 5 DECEMBER 1978

Article 1

The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare their determination to strengthen and deepen the inviolable friendship between the two countries and to develop all-round cooperation on the basis of equality, respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties shall make efforts to strengthen and broaden mutually beneficial economic, scientific and technical cooperation between them. With these aims in view, they shall develop and deepen cooperation in the fields of industry, transport and communications, agriculture, the use of natural resources, development of the power-generating industry and other branches of economy, to give each other assistance in the training of national personnel and in planning the development of the national economy. The two sides shall trade on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual benefit, and most-favoured nation treatment.

Article 3

The High Contracting Parties shall promote the development of cooperation and exchange of expertise in the fields of science, culture, art, literature, education, health services, the press,

radio, television, cinema, tourism, sport and other fields. The two sides shall facilitate the expansion of cooperation between organs of State power and public organizations, enterprise, culture and scientific institutions with a view to making a deeper acquaintance of the life, work experience and achievements of the peoples of the two countries.

Article 4

The High Contracting Parties, acting in the spirit of the traditions of friendship and good neighbourliness, as well as the UN Charter, shall consult each other and take by agreement appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence and territorial integrity of the two countries. In the interests of strengthening the defence capacity of the High Contracting Parties, they shall continue to develop cooperation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreements concluded between them.

Article 5

The USSR respects the policy of nonalignment which is pursued by the DRA and which is an important factor for maintaining international peace and security. The DRA respects the policy of peace pursued by the USSR and aimed at strengthening friendship and cooperation with all countries and people.

Article 6

Each of the High Contracting Parties solemnly declares that it shall not join any military or other alliance or take part in any groupings of states as well as in actions or measures directed against the other High Contracting Party.

Article 7

The High Contracting Parties shall continue to make every effort, to defend international peace and security of the peoples, to deepen the process of relaxation of international tension, to spread it to all areas of the world, including Asia, to translate it into concrete forms of mutually beneficial cooperation among states and to settle international disputed issues by peaceful means. The two sides shall actively contribute towards general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, under effective international control.

Article 8

The High Contracting Parties shall facilitate the development of cooperation among Asian states and the establishment of relations of peace, good neighbourliness and mutual confidence among them and the creation of an effective security system in Asia on the basis of joint efforts by all countries of the continent.

Article 9

The High Contracting Parties shall continue their consistent struggle against machinations by the forces of aggression, for the final elimination of colonialism and racism in all their forms and manifestation. The two sides shall cooperate with each other and with other peace-loving states in supporting the just struggle of the peoples for their freedom, independence, sovereignty and social progress.

Article 10

The High Contracting Parties shall consult each other on all major international issues affecting the interests of the two countries.

Article 11

The High Contracting Parties state that their commitments under the existing international treaties do not contradict the provisions of the present Treaty and undertake not to conclude any international agreements incompatible with it.

Article 12

Questions which may arise between the High Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of any provisions of the present Treaty, shall be settled bilaterally in the spirit of friendship, mutual understanding and respect.

Article 13

The present Treaty shall remain in force within 20 years of the day it comes into effect unless one of the High Contracting Parties declares six months before the expiration of this term of its desire to terminate the Treaty it shall remain in force for the next five years until one of the High Contracting Parties warns in writing the other Party, six months before the expiration of current five year term, about its intention to terminate the Treaty.

Article 14

If one of the High Contracting Parties expresses the wish in the course of the 20-year term of the Treaty to terminate

it before its expiration date, it shall notify in writing the other Party, six months before its suggested date of expiration of the Treaty, about its desire to terminate the Treaty before the expiration of the term and may consider the Treaty terminated as of the date thus set.

Article 15

The present Treaty shall be ratified and take effect on the day of exchange of the instruments of ratification, which is to take place in Kabul.

Done in Duplicate, each in the Russian and Dari languages, both texts being equally authentic.

Done in Moscow on 5th December 1978.

For the USSR
L. Brezhnev

For the DRA
N. Mohammad Taraki

.....

Source: Kabul Times, 6 December 1978.